



Remember 202 Hodgepodge

*...the completely
disorganized thoughts of an idiotic
scientist...*

by Dr. Joey Bone

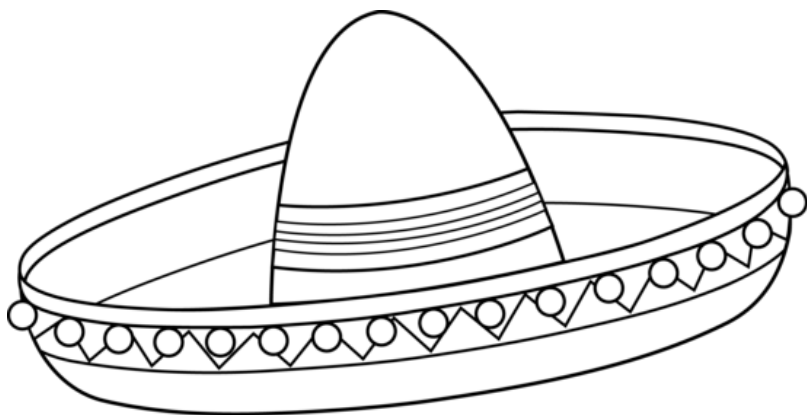
Booklet six

Preface

Some folks say that genuine art effortlessly bubbles-up in the mind of the artist, just sort of floating-up into consciousness. But, I can assure you that nothing like such an experience occurred in the writing of this miserable scribble, nor does this windy scrape qualify as art. And although, I'd like to tell you that this nest of scratch is true, or at least based on something honest, unfortunately it is complete and utter fiction, dredged-up from the addled imagination of an old, but skilled, liar. Again, please realize that this is a poorly written jumble of disorganized fiction, filled with boring redundancies and irritating segues, so if your left hemisphere demands a steady train of progressive well edited logic, this is very likely not for you.

Once more, make no mistake dear reader, not one iota of this pathetic prose, not a single phrase, is remotely accurate. From cover to cover, this entire chalky slate is concocted. If you recognize anything in here, which you think resembles reality, it is purely coincidental; nothing more! Nevertheless, coincidence can be extraordinary.

OBJ



MEXICO

It was a Friday, when I left Mobile, and that afternoon, I stopped in Louisiana to call Harold, and

tell him thanks and to bid farewell. He told me, 'Good Luck,' and to call him, when I got back, but I wouldn't be back in Mobile for more than a decade, and so that call was the last time I'd hear from Harold. Having driven straight from Mobile, across Mississippi, Louisiana, and down through Texas, I crossed the Mexican border one minute past midnight, after burying my money jar. Apparently, the border didn't have a closing time. Nuevo Laredo south of the border was starkly poorer than the American side in Webb County, Texas.

Sometimes it's best not to take the road less traveled, but to blaze your own.

A Dream In A Dream by Mosey R. Williams

I stopped at a gas station and filled my tank on the Mexican side, then for the next 180 miles, there would only be dark desert, the road, and two big bug storms. Once US Highway 35 crossed the border, it became Mexico's Highway 85, and the condition of the asphalt markedly diminished, dry and cracked, with chipped and crumbling edges; still, unlike Mobile, there were no potholes. Without a clue as to

where I was going, I launched out across the cactus filled Sonoran desert, just going somewhere for a change, anywhere to get away from my pathetic humdrum life in Mobile. Perchance, the three worst conditions of human existence are pain, depression, and boredom. Any of the three can make you dramatically revise your life.

About one hundred miles south of the border, I suddenly drove smack into the middle of a locus storm of biblical proportions. The bug tempest was so heavy that it blocked out the moonlight, then it cleared-up for about a minute, before I drove into the second bug storm. The two storms represented gazillions of grasshoppers. I just slowed the car and kept going, hoping to get out of the insect whirlwinds. *How long can a bug storm last?* Looking back, I should have just pulled over and waited it out, but being determined to cross the desert, I kept moving.

The rhythmically flashing white line became my touchstone, and for nearly the entire 180 miles, it remained laser straight. It was 180 miles of perfectly straight road. Thank goodness that the headlights and windshield wipers were operating, permitting me to keep a visual on that centerline, since I could only

see ten to twenty feet out into the bugs. *What's with Mexico and all these damn bugs? I thought this only happened in ancient Egypt.* It was like my trip had been cursed. *If I were superstitious, I'd say somebody is telling me to turn around.* Strangely, not another soul was traveling on that long stretch, that long night; for the entire 180 miles, I don't recall meeting or passing a single vehicle, nor did I pass the light of a house, a store, or a gas station. The only lights were my headlights, and the moon. Considering that no traffic came from either direction, had my car broken down, I'd most likely would have had to wait, until the next morning, before help arrived, if then. The desert was probably not a comfortable place to be, with the cool night likely being more merciful than the day.

Because of the innumerable mechanical Kamikazes, smashing their hard exoskeletons into my car, it sounded like I was driving through a mega hail storm. Never would I have imagined that mere grasshopper bodies could produce such loud and hard impacts. The bug blizzards were a surrealistic auditory events. The sheer number and weight of their bodies, noticeably slowed my car's forward momentum.

Considering how long I drove through the bug

clouds, the number of armored winged insects had to be nearly countless, but I could only see those, flying close to the headlights. In both storms, the white center line became my touchstone, my South Star, visible through the haze of bug bodies, and the smeared beastie juice slathering my windshield, and my windshield wipes pushed body parts and juice the entire time, I was in the two storms. There I was worried, because I was driving through a bunch of bugs, whereas my Dad used to repeatedly fly through a hail of bullets, during combat... driving vs. flying... bugs vs. bullets... the desert vs. the vast Pacific Ocean with plenty of sharks. Still, we were both fighting for freedom; where I was motivated by selfishness, Dad was hellbent on saving the free world.

The Ford's old brittle windshield wipers repeatedly slopped the thick sticky yellow bug guts back and forth, that night. Although the car was out of window washer fluid, there was so much bug juice, that in a way, the liquid insect extract acted to wash away the never-ending onslaught of exploding bodies. The smell reminded me of a freshly mowed lawn. There was a kind of bitter herbal smell, filling the car's interior, which I assumed was the bug juice.

One day, someone is gonna bottle this juice and sell it as a cancer cure.

Once inside the northern city limits of Monterey, and that's when a hissing burst of steam bellowed-out, from under the car hood. The dashboard temperature indicator was confirming the steam. By that time, I I was wiped-out, and so was the car. We both had fled from Mobile, till we could flee no further.

Most people travel to another country to check-in to a luxurious, or perhaps some quaint little, hotel or spa with certain amenities, and to take in certain pleasing sites: old or modern buildings, beaches, canyons, shopping malls, museums, snow-capped mountains, etc. Some people flee the oppression of their corrupt governments. On the other hand, I had fled to be free, to slip the bonds of my dull life, before it was too late... before Margo became pregnant, and I was forever trapped, working for just enough to get-by, until I died. At the age of twenty-five, I was already feeling too old, but that I was lucky to have made it that far. Somewhere on earth, there had to be something better! Now days, many Mexicans flee Mexico to enter the US, in search of a better life, I did the same, but in reverse. Maybe one

day, large groups of Americans will be fleeing into Mexico, seeking a better life.

Pulling over to the side of whatever unpopulated dark street I was on, I switched off the car's overheated engine. The sky was dark, save for the moonlight, and there wasn't a streetlight in sight. It was cool, and silent, except for the slowly attenuating hiss of steam, and a few popping and pinging sounds, coming from the cooling engine. *God, I hope the head isn't warped.* In the pitch black, it was hard to tell where I was, but judging from the surrounding metal warehouses, and the plain block buildings, the area seemed to be an industrial section of Monterey. The place was cast in an eerie grayish blue light, but the fatigue made the darkest areas glow an iridescent purple. I'd had these peaceful glowing episodes since the color waves in my childhood, but these episodes of dark areas in my visual field glowing purple, always occurred separately from the color waves. I also periodically get visual seizures/migraines, expanding areas of highly colorful triangles of light.

[https://www.pinterest.com/
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The fact that there were no lights coming from the surrounding structures told me that no one was around, so I momentarily stepped out the car, stretched my stiff frame, and took a leak. I climbed back inside, slid the seat back, leaned my head back into the driver's seat, and while listening to the soft soothing hiss of steam, drifted off to much needed sleep. Although it was still dark but just before sunrise, it wasn't long before I was gazing at a luminous neon orangey-red sunset, which had not yet started displaying the dusky areas of gray.

Regions of the expansive sky soon resembled bright inverted turquoise lakes, surrounded by shores composed of breathtaking shimmering gold and orange clouds. I was walking around in the broad Sonoran desert, yet couldn't recall how I'd gotten there, and couldn't see my car, anywhere. *Where'd I park the car? Have I lost my car?* Oddly, the sand had a sparkling silvery quality, making me think it contained grains of the shiny metal. At that moment, I realized that I felt extremely good, no pain, no fatigue, nor frustration. *Maybe I'm high, because I'm free.* Large unfamiliar red birds, with human-like eyes blinked and winked, flew and hopped with lengthy drooping tails; some leaped from cactus to cactus,

without making the slightest sound, and without having to flap their wings. *What kind of weird birds are these?* The bushes, cacti , and red birds, threw long ultra-black shadows, across the sparkling silvery desert floor. Small brightly colored lizards with large bulbous eyes scurried across the sand, and some darted under sandy rock shelves, where I knew they were still watching me. *Is there real silver in this sand? Why do the animals have such humanlike eyes?* Both the birds and the lizards were nervously watching, as if they knew something was about to occur.

No wind blew, no sound was being made, yet the desert was filled with a disturbing intensity, like the soundless anticipatory moment before a bomb detonates, or perhaps that long fraction of a second, right after the executioner yells, 'Fire,' and the firing squad hasn't yet pulled their triggers. *Things are definitely different in this desert... no more Mobile.* Suddenly, like the lizards, I too felt that something was coming, an ominous thing.

Looking toward the horizon, I saw there was a distant flying object. The airborne object was riveting. It was big, and headed my direction. It looked to be about one thousand feet off the ground. The mysterious spherical entity was worrying me,

and was coming fast in my direction. As it neared, I was shocked to see that it was a gigantic white eyeball, with no lids, and its brown iris and dilated black pupil was mechanically sweeping back and forth, strategically scanning the sparkling silver desert floor. It was roughly the size of the Hindenburg, if you reshaped it into a sphere. As yet, the pupil of the eye hadn't located me, then a pang of terror swept through me. *It's time to hide!* To avoid detection, I dove behind a bus-sized boulder, held my breath, then became aware of my pounding heart. For some unknown reason, I was afraid of the eye. Yet oddly, I knew the eyeball couldn't hurt me; still, I was afraid of it seeing me. Then it dawned on me, that I was deeply ashamed. I was sorry for how easily I had ignored the love and loyalty of a good and beautiful wife, yet in those days, such shame was a rare thing for me, especially in a dream. Perhaps, I'd somehow confused my shame with fear. I have some faulty wiring.

Like an ominous alien spaceship, the monstrous eyeball, cruised over, and continued toward the opposite horizon, but without seeing me and without making the slightest sound. *I'm free!* The eye had looked a bit cartoonish. Having successfully escaped

its detection, I began to relax, breathing hard and sitting down on the silvery sands and leaning my back up against the massive brown rock. In my dream, I wondered what my good wife, Margo was dreaming about. A short older Mexican or perhaps he was part Indian, came strolling across the sands, and stopped at the rock I was leaning against. He was dressed in an old fashioned tweed suit, carrying a brown wooden cane, with a gold tip and handle, and began insistently tapping the cane tip on the stone, then he spoke in Spanish.

“Its time for you to wake up, and come out from behind that rock, Gringo! Tap, tap, tap, tap. Come out, now! Are you okay?” The well dressed little man repeated this in Spanish a couple of times, while continuing to tap the cane on the sandy boulder. Tap, tap, tap...” In the near future, I’d see an identical though much smaller eyeball floating in the closet-like restroom on the back of a Mexican passenger bus.

Upon awaking, the cane’s persistent tapping on the big brown boulder gave way to being a knuckle tapping on my driver’s window. The sun was well up, but a metal warehouse blocked the sun rays, which had likely allowed me to sleep a bit long. A Mexican

gentleman, wearing a bright lime green t-shirt, which said *Jimmy A. Swaggart Telecast, A Study in the Holy Word*, was staring at me. The short man was sporting extremely thick brown hair, with thick Elvis-type sideburns, and a neatly trimmed gray goatee. When he saw that I'd finally focused-in on him, he stopped his tapping on my car window, with the middle knuckle of his index finger. As I politely rolled down the window and the fresh morning air poured in, I realized that the air in my car was apparently stale. I'd been accustomed to awakening next to Margo, ergo I wondered if Margo missed me. I missed her terribly, but just couldn't take whatever she and Mobile held in store for me: white picket fences, listening over and over to *Amazing Grace* and wondering why people believed the words, staying half baked on weed, fathering unwanted kids, working with idiotic rednecks for low pay, being hunted by the *KKK* affiliated police, who'd probably eventually put me in jail for dealing whatever drugs Harold supplied me, so Margo could buy her precious antiques.

The gray bearded gentleman continued frowning and gazing at me, with great concern, and then of course, he spoke to me in Spanish. "How are you?

Are you from America?" *He knows I am.*

I figured the guy thought I was drunk or stoned. There were men standing in front of my car, and I wondered why they were pointing at and gazing so hard at my car's grill and headlights.

"I'm good, thank you, but I think my car isn't too good. And yes, I'm from America." I responded, and assuming that the sun still rose in the East, I pointed North, to indicate America. Glancing at the car's ashtray, which had once held the thousand hits of orange microdot, I recalled that grisly day at the Mobile trap house. *Thank God, I out of Mobile.*

And just like that, with the end of the dream, my life had completely changed. The nightmare of my life in Mobile had at last concluded, and I'd awoken anew in a completely different world, speaking a different language, surrounded by a far kinder gentler people. Not surprisingly, Mr. Gray Beard appeared genuinely worried. *Why does he look so concerned?*

"What's wrong with your car?" He asked, turning up his left palm, and again I looked at the small group of men, still eyeballing the front of my car.

"Lots of steam! The engine was too hot..."

overheated! I went through a large storm of insects, last night.” I said, as I climbed out of the car, then I stretched and again wondered why the men were still looking at the from of my car. *This guy probably thinks I’m deranged. God, how I need a cup of coffee!* It was as if I’d jumped through a time portal, like I was a twelve year-old kid again, living in southern Spain, speaking my so-so Spanish, and looking for some excitement. The Spanish language of Mexico, though accented slightly different, and with a few new words, was basically the same as the Spanish of Spain. Because of the indigenous Indians of Mexico, even many of the people looked somewhat like the darker Andalusian peoples of southern Spain.

<http://www.native-languages.org/mexico.htm>

“One moment.” The aging gray goatee said, raising an index finger.

Gray Beard turned his back to me, then walked back across the street, where stood a small group of men milling around and smoking in front of the open double doors of the large metal building, which was still blocking the rising sun. Apparently for sometime

after sunrise, I'd been sleeping propped-up in the driver's seat, in full view of that small crowd of men, waiting to begin their work day in that big tin warehouse.

The men in front of my car were still pointing at the grill. *Why do they keep pointing at my car?* Since it had been dark, when I arrived, I hadn't noticed the sign over the wide double door to the large building, which read, *FORD*. As luck would have it, my old *Ford* had magically broken-down right in front of the only *Ford* garage in Northeastern Mexico. What were the odds of that happening? It was a coincidence, indeed, and had to be the hand of God. *No doubt, this means that I'm where I'm supposed to be.* Walking around to the front of my inoperative vehicle, I was suddenly thunderstruck, and understood why the men had been pointing at my car.

The old *Ford* looked like some strange expressive creation straight out of a Wes Craven horror movie. It was as if the front of my car had been repainted with a super thick hardened yellowish brownish yellow syrup filled with literally thousands of the bodies of giant grasshoppers, as well as their countless disassembled body parts: heads, antennas, wings, legs, thoraxes, all glued together by the ultra-

sticky, and by then, congealed thick brownish yellow bug juice. A couple of the robotic animals were still barely twitching! *Christ! This looks so crazy!*

In places, the weighty bug-goo coating was almost two inches thick, especially over the grill and headlights. The odd bewildering sight was a bit dream like. It was as if the car had been transformed into a bizarre piece of halloween art. After the aforementioned disturbing eyeball dream and looking at my bug-covered car, I wondered if I wasn't undergoing some weird surreal transformation. The rear of the car was still comparatively clean, but the front bumper, grill, hood, headlights, and most of the front fenders were covered in the thick gelatinous bug art.

The radiator grill was heavily coated and caked-up by the thickest layer of insect biomass. Huge streaks of juice and insect body parts ran down the sides of the car, as well as over the roof. It was a miracle that I'd been able to see the road that night, since the headlights were thickly covered. Luckily, I had young 20/05 eyes, back then, years before graduate school would leave me with 20/20. Graduate school, *Index Medicus*, and the *National Library of Medicine* and *Pubmed*, changed my visual

acuity. One of the odd things about *Pubmed* is that whenever a scientific article seems to address a possible cure, the article's abstract doesn't get printed; nevertheless, you can still order it, through your local library. Most people don't take the time to do that. Quite possibly, Big Pharma, *NIHH*, and the *AMA* influence which abstracts get published in *Pubmed*.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

Quite conceivably, the chunky deep coating of insect goop, covering the car's radiator was why the car had overheated, not through any fault of *Ford* engineering, unless you say that their engineers had foolishly failed to consider the possibility of driving through two giant locus storms, back to back. Looking at the car, I was praying the problem was just a blown radiator hose, and not a damaged head gasket, or warped head. Regardless, I had no tools, and no replacement parts, not even a decent roll of duct tape; nothing, but the rust-covered hand trowel, a ratty old backpack, a new road atlas, a couple of paperbacks, less than five hundred dollars in cash, and a few old clothes in a briefcase-sized bright blue

cloth suitcase, I'd purchased for ten cents in a thrift store. I shop at thrift stores a lot, and because of that I probably need to have a series of yard sales.

Indeed, my car was an eerie sight to behold. To be sociable, I described driving through the two insect storms, and how hard it was to see the white center line. The men then raised the car hood and talked among themselves. One man checked the oil dipstick and fortunately there was no gravy. From their blue overalls, it was clear the men worked at the *Ford* garage. They were pointing and diagnosing my car. Looking at the white underside of the hood, it was easy to see where a hose had leaked, and the rusty water had painted the underside of the hood. This was long before computers were put in cars, and so diagnostics were more like an investigation, looking for clues.

One of the men climbed into the driver's seat, put the car in neutral and steered, while the others simply pushed my car through the large opening, and into the *Ford* garage. They never asked for my permission, but I trusted them, and they knew I did, because they knew they were trustworthy. They were honest helpful men, where working people looked-out for one another. The older gray goateed man,

who tapped on my driver's window, told me that it would probably be about twenty minutes, before the car would be ready. I thanked him.

After being in the car so long, I strolled around the nearby neighborhood, to loosen-up. Stepping between two buildings, I emptied my long overdue bladder, then using a water faucet on the side of an abandoned building, I washed my face and hands, took my shirt off, and washed my arm pits. That part of Monterey was unlike anything in the United States, with industrial buildings, factories, and warehouses, mixed right in with people's private homes, commercial and residential together. Putting my shirt back on, I spied a small trailer configured to cook and sell breakfast to workers, but I only ordered a coffee. Sipping the brew, and stepping back on the street, I gazed around. A few of the streets were dirt, other were well paved, and still others were in various states of disrepair. The quality of the roads likely had much to do with the political connection of the associated homes and businesses. Monterey was a zoning hodgepodge, and that was just one of many things I loved about the country. The lack of municipal organization appealed to me, and America's need for such organization has always

seemed like a social neurosis. A few blocks from the garage, I came across a small motel, consisting of nothing more than a row of six tiny white stucco cottages. The house at the end had the word, *Oficina*, awkwardly hand painted in bright red letters, above the door. The lettering was far from perfect, but the meaning was absolutely clear, and my body would soon be in need of serious sleep, later that evening. The long drive and the strangely real dream had left me hammered. Nevertheless, I was free of Mobile, and felt like I been reborn, and I don't mean like those ridiculous bigoted Southern Baptists.

After knocking on the office door, someone called-out for me to enter, so I turned the knob and stepped inside the makeshift office, and rented a room for one day from an elderly white-haired gentleman, who stood behind the check-in counter, and was under the constant supercilious surveillance of his lovely spouse. She stood there glaring wide-eyed, lips pressed tight together, with her arms folded, just beneath her overly large breasts. Compared to her stature, her mammaries were so disproportionately large that they somewhat lopped over and hid her forearms, as well as most of her abdomen. *Those breasts could provide enough shade for*

a family... no way she doesn't get backaches. My preferences include small, medium, and large breasts, but massive breasts have never been my thing. Still, I couldn't help but look at them, not because I found them attractive, but solely because they were some of the largest breasts I'd ever seen. She caught me looking at those mega-mammaries, and her strict little mouth morphed into a tiny brief smile. *She thinks I like them.* Politely, I covertly smiled back, when the husband was scribbling in the registry. She looked younger than him, but she was clearly the boss.

Perhaps, I was witnessing a marriage in a meltdown, ergo I wondered about what it was he'd done, or hadn't done, to deserve her unambiguous scorn. Frequently, I've noticed that an inordinate number of financially poor and skinny males with considerable sex drive are attracted to those women sporting 'extremely' large tatas. I've also noticed that the guys, who go for the giant breasts, seem to be the guys, who just have to marry a mothering type of woman. In a way, it makes sense... big tits... subconscious memories of nursing... By the same token, they seem to often be the guys, who're more ready for fatherhood, and whether they are

financially prepared usually makes no difference to them. I hypothesized that perhaps he'd cheated on her, sometime during the last ten years, because she looked like she knew how to hold a grudge.

Of course, it was possible that before they died, the older couple might have miraculously become a loving pair. For many people, when death begins to bang loudly on the door, it can help to have a friend, as the hinges slowly creak, and you stare into the void. Still, when that journey begins, it is doubtful that any friend will accompany you, into the great unknown. Some people think it would be nice to have someone there, holding your hand at the bitter end. On the other hand, it may not be so nice. The person holding your hand may just be a reminder of how much life you wasted. Hospitals and doctors have a way of keeping people balancing too long on the threshold, while you slowly decay, and they empty your pockets. Having worked in a hospital, I've seen that not everyone dies the same. Some people die in great fear, others remain fearless. Some die primarily concerned about their loved ones, others are only concerned about their own fate. Some people are angry, others depressed. Some transition through classic stages of dying, whereas others don't.

There's even the occasional person, who seems happy to die, like my aforementioned friend Matt Kelly, who had almost died of the deadly neuroblastoma, but had successfully managed to kill the bear.

The daily fee for the tiny one room cottage was two dollars. So, I didn't attempt to haggle. I was pleasantly surprised that they took my American greenbacks. Later, I found out that almost every place in Mexico was more than happy to accept American dollars, instead of the Mexican peso, which was then in a steep high speed nose-dive.

The little cottage couldn't have been plainer. It was one room, containing a comfortable small bed, with thick white sheets, covered by a multicolored handwoven Indian blanket, complete with various symbols and animals, as well as various geometrical patterns. I suppose you could say the symbols were Indian hieroglyphs. The bathroom floor and halfway up the walls was covered in red, pink, and lime colored tiles. Mexican people do love bright colors. The sleeping room was topped-off with a well known picture of Jesus holding the classic a white lamb. *I'm definitely not in the United States*. Pocketing the room key and the hand scribbled receipt, I ambled back to the *Ford* garage. The car had been repaired, and the

men were using a water hose and a straw-broom to help clean off the bug goop, from the front of the radiator and headlights.

“Thanks for fixing my car. How much do I owe you?” I inquired of Mr. Gray Goatee.

With a smile, he merely replied, “Gratis (free).” *Well, this is definitely not an American Ford garage.*

You rarely, if ever, see anything for free from a US business. Just imagine pulling into your local *Ford* or *Chevy* garage, and the service manager saying that they’ll fix something on your car for free, then they wash your car, to boot, and you didn’t buy the car from them. Car dealerships in America are invariably the most expensive place you can have your car repaired, and it’s usually done only by appointment, then you’re frequently forced to sit and wait for hours, while they try to find additional costly things on your car, which supposedly need fixing. Rarely, do they readily provide a loaner, even if your warranty so stipulates. It’s sort of like going to the doctor. You have an appointment, but you still wait far too long, then pay through the nose, and then they’ll want to run additional expensive, often unnecessary tests and prescribe drugs, which sometimes require still other drugs to counter the

side effects! The car dealers don't care about you, and neither does the *AMA*. Correspondingly, American cars are often lacking in quality, as is American medicine. Back then in Mexico, the vast majority of the citizens had a warm heart, filled with kindness. The nature of the people was much like that of the Andalusians of southern Spain. They exuded a genuine feeling of, '*Love thy neighbor.*' Northeastern Mexico is now the sovereign territory of several deadly drug cartels. Today, Monterey is mostly run by the *Los Zetas* cartel, possibly the most technologically innovative, sophisticated, and supposedly the toughest of the Mexican cartels.

While lots of Mexicans and Central Americans now cross our southern border, the vast majority of these good people are only trying to escape a country ravaged by the deadly rule of certain drug cartels. And as hard as it may be to believe, it is the United States government which allows these cartels to stay in business. To understand that assertion please read the chapter entitled, "Ending the Drug Problem," in book VII. Certainly, some of those, who are crossing, bring drugs with them, but they are by far and away, the smallest minority. Of course, for political purposes certain Americans would like to foster the

idea that those shady border-crossers are predominately criminal. Faux paranoia has long been a cheap political/corporate tool.

A civilian organization and the government of Nuevo León appeared to recently have achieved an unprecedented truce between roughly one hundred gangs, operating in the capital of Monterrey, and its surrounding areas, but even with said truce, how safe can the once wonderful city be, with so many gangs? When people live in extreme poverty and their government officials are corrupt, the money-making gangs are an attractive alternative to poverty. With the cartels taking over all of Mexico, I've often wondered what's become of those good people, I once meant there. Without the profits from marijuana, meth, cocaine, etc., these cartels would probably simply cease to exist.

Solving the drug problem may not be difficult as you might think. First, you simply legalize marijuana, letting the weed smokers grow their own, and then to solve the problem with the rest of the addicting drugs, once again, please consider reading the chapter, entitled, "Ending The Drug Problem," in Book VII of this series. The concepts described therein, if adopted, should work for any country, to

end their addictive drug problem, and put all the world's drug dealers out of business. As insane as it may sound, ridding the world of illegal drugs is fairly easily done. Wouldn't it be a blessing to put those cartels totally out of business, without having to fight the war on drugs, without having to fire a single shot, without having to arrest anyone, and all the while, the number of addicts steadily drops?

That group of Mexican *Ford* employees was wonderful; lots of smiles were exchanged, and I thanked them profusely for fixing my car. As it turned out, I had gotten the last radiator hose, the garage had in stock, which fit my car. My luck seemed to be on a roll. After consulting the motel manager and renting a room, I found a small taco stand, bought three dozen tacos, placed them in a shallow cardboard box, and carried them to the guys at the garage. During my stay in Mexico, baring my parents and my child, I garnered more kindness, than I ever received in the United States.

As soon discussed herein, after a few days, I was to become something of a member of a Mexican street-gang, and then I'd rekindle my old profession of drug dealing. The membership with the gang, literally fell on top of me. Even in the gang, I

received considerable unexpected benevolence. As with my black paperboys and most of the black folk in Mobile, it was simply a matter of respect, and of extending a little good will. One other useful tidbit is to avoid showing uncertainty or fear, since such things can sometimes be misinterpreted, and become infectious.

I've known plenty of scientist and other professionals with extremely high IQs. Also, some were social idiots. While some might think a high IQ should command respect, nothing speaks louder than things such as: kindness, and integrity. Another laudable human trait is courage, my father's standout attribute. He was also impeccably honest. I would have been content to have inherited either. While visiting another country, an air of aloofness or an attitude of superiority, only serves to alienate. No one enjoys an insufferable festering ego, unless it's another ego maniac, trying to justify his own character flaw.

Ego maniacs may not realize just how obvious they appear to the rest of the world, for if they did, they'd be forced to change, due to embarrassment, but this embarrassment may be something they're incapable of experiencing. Perhaps the primary

reason they never understand how absurd they appear has to do with the fact that most of the people, who have to endure arrogant fools, find that it's just not worth the ensuing battle to point it out to them, ergo the egotistical bastards continue to think that they're skillful orators and master salespeople, politicians, CEOs, etc., rather than the tiresome self-centered blockheads they actually are. Moreover, whatever it is they are good at, ego maniacs never shut-up about, still no amount of smooth talk can make-up for a suppurating ego. Such venal shitheads are hard to stomach. In Mexico, there seemed to be a much smaller percentage of such folks, but when I did encounter one, they were generally dangerous.

While in Mexico, I noticed that some American tourists would assume that because they were wealthier than the average Mexican, or because they are better educated, they could justifiably shoulder an air of disdain, or superiority. Certainly not all Americans are like that, but too many. Maybe, such people were the genesis of the book entitled, *The Ugly American*. Some people feel that book was nearly single-handedly the cause for the formation of the *Peace Corps*. The United States desperately needed to spread good will. We now spread an

ungodly amount of war: special op missions, drone strikes, air strikes, etc.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

The_Ugly_American

When I drove my newly repaired *Ford* back to the cottages, the manager, with his super buxom wife, examined the front of my car, then loaned me a: hose, bucket, small box of soap powder, wooden scrub brush, and a couple of raggedy old bath towels to finish the bug cleaning. The garage had done an excellent replacing the hose, and cleaned the bugs from the radiator and the headlights, but the hood and front quarter panels still needed scrubbing. After I'd been scouring for about twenty minutes, the old manager came back outside, but that time, without the overly endowed señora, and helped me finish the carwash. A few flecks of the paint were lost, during the removal of acidic bug guts, so for years to come, I would see the missing spots of paint and recall the bug storms in the Sonoran desert. Oddly enough, those bare spots never rusted. That old car was easy to work on, got decent gas mileage, and so I never should have sold it. Cars are now made so that they

require special expensive equipment, and a NASA aerospace engineer, as well as a computer scientist, just to do a simple tune-up. It's all about whatever makes the most money for the auto industry. How hard would it be to make an extremely dependable all electric, non-polluting car, with a 500 mile range, and without any built-in attrition?

The cottage manager had volunteered to help me, without my saying anything. Perhaps, if life deprives you of certain financial accouterments, and there's no real hope of being able to dig yourself out, then the true jewels of human goodness shine more brightly, ergo things such as love, kindness, and sharing are more apt to become your life's joys, rather than money. How brilliantly kind my twenty black paperboys had been to me, as well as to each other, yet how utter devastating their poverty. Carmen, our family's maid from Spain, was filled with love and compassion, but she was hopelessly indigent, working for six cents an hour, to support her six kids, and a drunk for a husband. Perchance, the tighter the grip of poverty, the more certain people appreciate each other, since with money, love and kindness are the only riches they have.

Maybe for some, the more money, the more their

focus remains on making and preserving money, and so the less time available to appreciate people. Making money, like many things, can become addictive, and it can take-on an excessive level of importance; much as the aforementioned father of Ann Hamburger, had worked his daughter like a slave in his souvenir store in Ocean City, Maryland, and he hardly spoke to her. In addition, the Jewish commander in Spain, to whom I once sold collector coins, was so focused on making money that he lost his relationship with his kids. Perhaps, that was some arcane Jewish thing, for while I've also seen such narrow-minded monetary focus in several non-Jewish families, it seems to me that it's more pronounced amongst the Jews I've known, and so it makes me wonder if it may be something in their DNA. Ascribing an ethnic, genetic, or racial reason to any behaviorism can be a risky proposition. In the past, such nucleotide suggestions were cruelly used to justify great social wrongs such as racism, ethics cleansing, and other more subtle forms of oppressive discrimination. Now scientists tend to express greater social sensitivity, than do certain of our political leaders. Lord knows, it's not hard to tell that Donald Trump might just be a wee bit of a racist. That may be why so many white southern males love him.

Still, to attribute capabilities and behaviors to anything involving the human genome is dangerous; but like it or not, we know the genome must play something of a major role in human behavior. We apply genetic explanations for many things, like phenotypic traits: eye color, skin color, height, facial characteristics, etc. But, the brain is not just a plastic thing, only created by experience, but all its' structures do have a very real genetic basis. Nucleotide sequences also play role in certain diseases: achondroplasia, alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, antiphospholipid syndrome, autism, autosomal dominant polycystic kidney disease, breast cancer, colon cancer, Crohn's disease, cystic fibrosis, dream disease, Down syndrome, Duchenne Muscular dystrophy, hemophilia, Huntington's disease, Klinefelter syndrome, Marfan syndrome, neurofibromatosis, Parkinson's disease, phenylketonuria, prostate cancer, retinitis pigmentosa, sickle cell disease, skin cancer, Tay-Sachs, thalassemia, Wilson disease, and many other conditions. But again, if a scientist might attempt to ascribe any aspect of one's cognitive ability or behavior to the genome, heaven help him or her.

The next day, I went to talk with the motel

manager, to ask him about driving to Mexico City, roughly 450 miles further south. On a whim that morning, I had decided to travel there, assuming that the monstrously large city might mean there'd be more things to do, and greater opportunity, a place to better throw-off the yoke Mobile's oppression. The elderly manager informed me that trying to keep my car in MC would be difficult, as well as costly consideration: the lack of parking, crazy amounts of traffic, many narrow one way streets, the high number of car break-ins, and how the Mexican police seemed to relish harassing cars with American license plates. Where American cash was popular in Mexico, Americans themselves were a bit unpopular, especially with the police. The slightest traffic infraction could cost an American dearly. A criminal arrest, often meant that the State-side family members were going to be bled of funds, to secure the survival and release of the arrested party.

Besides, I enjoyed running back then, and taxis and subways were cheap and could take you almost anywhere in the city. Wisely, the cottage manager advised that I simply take the overnight train to Mexico City, so I asked for directions to the Monterey train station. As things turned-out, the motel

manager was indeed right, about not taking the car to MC. After taking my Mobile house key off the keyring and tossing it in a trashcan, I left my car and its' key, with the old motel manager, telling him that he could use it, as he liked, while I was gone. That evening he drove me to the train station, and I purchased a one-way ticket for the giant MC. In 1975, there were only three cities in the world with at least ten million inhabitants: New York, Tokyo, and Mexico City.

“Please don’t drive her too hard, change the oil every five thousand kilometers, and clean the plugs, when it starts to run rough. I just cleaned the points but they’re old, so if she quits, it’s probably the points. She uses 30 weight oil. I’m not sure, when I’ll be coming back, but please take good care of her.” Those were my parting words, before I turned and climbed aboard the train, holding my blue cloth suitcase.

Sleeping in my comfortable casket-sized compartment, I found the rhythm of the rails to be quite relaxing. Likewise, as a child, slumbering near the engine room of a military transport ship going to Spain, I’d slept well. Perhaps, it something like back to the womb, filled with warm supportive amnionic

fluid, with Mom's rhythmic heartbeat. On the other hand, maybe sleep comes, when I know I'm going somewhere new, and won't be waking-up in the same boring place. Most new places are not boring, at least for a while. I've often had a hankering for the bizarre, or at minimum, the unconventional.

Grandpa had once mentioned that someone in our family's ancestry had been a member of a wandering tribe of Sephardic Jews, who had settled in Sicily; supposedly, they were the only free Jewish family on the entire big triangular island, which hadn't been run out, or enslaved. There was a time, when Jews weren't too popular there. Later, one of the offspring migrated to Spain. Then later, one of their descendants sailed to Cuba, to avoid yet more persecution in Spain. A few generations later, one of my ancestors sailed northwest from Cuba to Pensacola, Florida, and one of their offspring later rode in a wagon to Mobile, Alabama. What portion of my ancestry is Jewish is far from clear... one reason why I want to get my DNA ancestry done.

You may recall hearing the stories about Thomas Jefferson fathering children with his black slave, Sally Hemings. Oddly enough the DNA of her descendants may have more closely matched a man

named, Field Jefferson, Thomas's uncle. These same DNA samples may have shown that Jefferson's Y chromosome came from an uncommon lineage of Jews, originating from the Middle East, who later came to Europe. Jefferson's Y chromosome belongs to the branch called K2, and it's quite rare. My Y chromosome belongs to the same branch, and as with Jefferson, and perhaps his uncle, I also prefer black women. The Y chromosome of the K2 branch occurs in a few men in Spain and Portugal, but is most common in the Middle East and eastern Africa. According to certain genetics reports about 10 percent of men in Oman and Somalia carry the same gene. (*The American Journal of Physical Anthropology* Volume 132, Issue 4, pages 584-589, April 2007.) About 32 percent of humans with the Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry are in haplogroup K.

At the University of Leicester in England, geneticists led by Turi E. King and Mark A. Jobling, have now undertaken a study of the branch or lineage to which Jefferson's Y chromosome belongs. Hence, it appears that Jefferson might have been America's first Jewish president, at least genetically speaking, maybe that has something to do with the fact that he was the foremost author of the

Declaration of Independence (1776). There's a thought for you. Oh, those sneaky Jews! The original drafts of the Declaration of Independence, which were written by Jefferson, are markedly different, than the one which was finely adopted. One of the major differences was 'inalienable rights' versus Jefferson's original use of 'inherent rights.' With all of today's controversy over legal immigrants, that difference is being discussed. Radical right and left wingers are fighting it out over such things. 'Inherent' might mean that even the immigrants are entitled to those rights, whereas 'inalienable' sort of implies that immigrants are not so entitled. I dare say, that single word may currently come to have marked significance.

The next day, bright blue cloth suitcase in hand, I stepped-off of the train, into the loud bustling world of the colossal metropolis, Mexico City, which at that time, was about 1400 square kilometers. Without the slightest plan, and not knowing a soul, I strolled about, looking at the various buildings, the people, the stores, etc. At the time, I had no idea where I was in the city. The idea that I didn't know anyone felt great, I suppose because no one expected anything of me. So often we think in terms of those around us,

and how they perceive us. What will such-and-such (friend, significant other, relative, boss, therapist, teacher, mulla, priest, neighbor, rabbi, hooker, gigolo, email and *Facebook* pals, etc.) think about what's happening, or what I've done, or what I've failed to do? Even writing this book, I've continually thought about what my current friends will think, when reading it, if they ever do. But alone in Mexico City, that type of thinking had stopped. In MC, I became my own person; there was no dipping into my grab-bag of personal judges, no more human touchstones, or responsibilities. *This is great... no accountability.* I recall wondering if I would miss American food.

That form of solitary offers a form of tranquility. Without friends or family, one becomes their own ombudsman, except for those never ending muses from early childhood. In MC, there was no one I had to account to. No one in the world knew where I was, and so I was exempt from the usual human reckoning. While I generally love and enjoy people, and with the exception of my daughter, I tend to be happy to be periodically free of them. If that sounds cold and unfeeling, believe me, it was how I felt there in MC... happy to be unburdened by all my

young life's relationships.

Walking around, I tried to pick-out people, who looked like they might be helpful and honest, to ask them where I might find a decent, yet economical, place to live. In a world of strangers, you're more apt to rely on visual impressions and intuition, and I don't give a damn about that stupid old saying, for often you 'can' judge a book by its' cover. It's almost as if the varied positions of the muscles of facial expression, become their own voice, and reading faces in Mexico was even easier, than in the United States. As mentioned, the vast majority of Mexicans are kind and generous folks, but the less frequent psychopaths seem more pernicious. In America, psychopaths tend to be skillful at concealing their vicious natures; whereas, in Mexico such evil people tended to overtly display their pathology with an aggressive pridefulness; as if to say, "I'm a bad motherfucker, and I'm proud of it, and I don't honestly care what you think." Still back then, it seemed like there were comparatively fewer of such evil folks in Mexico. But now, with the major influx of drug gangs, so have come the psychopaths, or maybe, it's more like the kinder people are escaping the psychopaths.

After talking with a few folks, surprisingly, I found a very nice room in a high-rise hotel for little more than the price of the small cottage in Monterey. The hotel manager was either extra generous, or he simply made a mistake. I'd arrived the day before he left, to go work at another hotel, and so my low price rental agreement may have been intentionally done to piss-off the new management. Oddly enough, when I signed-in, I didn't have to show ID. The small room had a large comfortable bed, but an enormous, and rather outlandish, bathroom. The bathroom's floor and walls were constructed of large slabs of beautiful interflowing random black and white patterns of marble, and on the outer wall of said bathroom was a single narrow, floor-to-ceiling, window. The window looked-out over the seemingly endless sprawling city... endless, because it literally continued over the curve of the earth in every direction, so the viewer was given the impression that the entire planet was one never-ending sprawling sea of buildings.

Mexico City was a hodgepodge, with various modern business districts, expansive housing sectors, from slums to multimillion dollar mansions, massive industrial areas, public parks, commercial, shopping,

and restaurant zones, zoos, gardens, movie theaters, playhouses, etc., which were frequently not confined to discrete sections, but rather mixed together, in a pellmell helter-skelter somewhat pleasing manner. Back then in MC, unlike the United States, race mixing was far more prevalent, and not just biologically, but there was also a more relaxed day-to-day social interaction amongst peoples for different skin tones, as if race just didn't seem to matter. There was a respect for all humanity... not so much wasted energy on maintaining certain distances. Skin color was viewed only as the content of melanin in their skin, not to be correlated with the measure of their character. Dr. King would have enjoyed MC, back then. If few years back (1993), a statue was erected in MC to Dr. King.

Because of the tall narrow window in the exterior shower-wall, people could look in, while I showered, but I was so high-up it didn't matter. Looking out the window, about nine blocks away, I could see people going in and out of what appeared to be a bus station. Later, I found out said station was the *Estrella de Plata* bus line. The buses, operating there, appeared archaic; probably made in the fifties; the types of buses I'd seen as a small boy, in Mobile,

where the black people could only sit in the back, and not because they preferred to.

In a big city, it's not wise to walk around with all your money in your pockets. When I first got to MC, to hide most of my money. I pulled the bed away from the wall, pulled the carpeting up off the tack strips, lifted the foam padding, and then thinly spread-out the bills on the bare concrete floor, so that they wouldn't create a noticeable rise in the carpeting. Then, I repositioned the foam, forcefully stretched and reattached the carpet to the tack strips, and lastly, I pushed the bed back over the carpet, thereby concealing the cash. To this day, I'd still love to live in that same hotel room, with the big black and white marble bathroom, but it's been well over forty years, so I'm not too sure I could still locate the place; that is provided it still exists, but considering the number of violent earthquakes MC has had, in the last few years, it may no longer be standing. Moreover, with the increase in violent drug-related crime, traveling around MC might be too risky.

<https://www.numbeo.com/crime/in/Mexico-City>

Still, perhaps if I dressed-up in some old cheap clothes, and didn't bathe too often, I could probably escape the notice of the criminal element, and once again, live in the beautiful city. I'd only get mugged or kidnapped, if they thought I had money or had some wealthy relatives, who might be willing to pay a ransom. If I went there now days, the trick would be for me to stay in a poor place, tell everyone, that all my friends and family had died, and continually beg and borrow money to give the impression that I was indigent. Moreover, I couldn't arrive by air, only by bus from some other Mexican town, using an old laundry bag or plastic shopping bags for luggage. I'd probably fly into a nearby city, like Toluca, then ride the bus to Mexico City. The best thing to do would be to find some older couple, who had a room for rent, maybe an airbnb.

There are those sinister people, who watch the departing passengers at the airports for potential kidnap and robbery victims. If now I were to return to Mexico City, it wouldn't be wise to even forward money to a Mexican bank, unless it was in very small amounts, spread-out over several MC banks. There have been cases where Mexican bank employees, working for the cartels, have notified their criminal

cohorts about the size of people's bank accounts. I might be better off using a company like *PayPal*, or *Western Union* to receive multiple small amounts, and picking up the monies at various locations, around the city. It would also help to have a couple extra IDs, incase some *PayPal* or *Western Union* employee worked for the criminals. Considering the prevalence of crime, maybe extra IDs are still easily procured in MC. When dealing with a counterfeiter, it would be best to imply that you work for a large criminal agency, whom you don't wish to disclose, but who may be interested in hiring them in the future for the creation of various documents, ergo the counterfeiter might be less likely to betray you.

Several different cartels now operate within Mexico City. Al-Qaida and Isis are trivial threats, compared to the dangers posed by the Mexican drug cartels. As far as the US government is concerned, Al-Qaida's main purpose is to drum-up business for the military industrial complex (MIC). Thousands of bombing missions are being carried-out against Isis, and those expensive bombs and costly jets are a huge money maker, for the weapons making corporations of the MIC. I wouldn't be a bit surprised, if many, if not most, of those airstrikes are carried-out at night,

just so the pilots can blindly drop their expensive bombs without being able to determine what they actually hit... empty desert, just geographical coordinates, in the middle of an empty desert, but with lots of sand.

Much as blowing-up uninhabited jungle in Vietnam, blowing-up sand dunes in the Middle East makes big money for the MIC: bombs, jet fuel, aircraft maintenance, the corresponding fleet operations (carrier battle group), etc. After so many hours of operation various parts of the aircraft must be automatically replaced, the fuel gets burned-up, there is a massive amount of telecommunications support, the weapons the AWAC support, and the maintenance of the offshore battle group cost tens of millions a day just to operate in peace time! The monetary benefits for the MIC are huge, even one simple airstrike is extremely expensive, much less thousands of strikes.

Illegal drugs mean more arrests, ergo the Mexican drug cartels clearly support the prison corporations. Roughly eighty percent of the nonviolent people in prison are in there for drug-related issues. The illegal drug trade also keeps the *US Coast Guard* and the *DEA* rolling in dough.

Wouldn't it be nice if the police didn't have to enforce drug laws, but instead focus on things such as: assault and battery, theft, rape, embezzlement? The *DEA* wouldn't be a necessity, without the cartels. Besides without the massive drug trade, all those drug treatment centers, which rarely cure anyone, might go belly-up, and Big Pharma might lose a significant amount of income without their relatively ineffective rehab medicines, which work poorly at best.

The morning after sleeping in my new hotel room, I questioned the desk clerk, about what there was to do in Mexico City. An imaginative desk clerk or concierge can be worth his or her weight in gold, to the visitor of a foreign land.

"There is everything to do here in Mexico City!" He replied, raising his eyebrows and turning his face slightly to one side, while keeping his eyes on me, and his eyebrows elevated, apparently trying to determine if my interest involved somethings illegal.

"What have you got in mind... women, drugs?"

"How about things that are for free, or at the very least cheap, and nothing too radical? I don't want to end-up in a Mexican jail." I inquired.

First, the desk clerk suggested that I go see some moldy old churches and cathedrals, but I'd visited enough of those in Europe, as a kid, so I wrinkled-up my nose. He then mentioned going to visit the *Chapultepec Museum*, also known as the *National Museum of Anthropology*. He handed me a complimentary folded-up street map of the city, and with his valuable refillable gold-tipped fountain pen, he proudly placed a tiny X mark, where the museum was located, and he then circled the hotel, where we were located, so I could later find my way back. I tipped him and complimented his expensive gold-tipped fountain pen, and he smiled his appreciation. Such writing instruments are hardly used, now.

In my day, some people, usually the self-important men in the business world, took great pride in the quality of their fountain pens. Gold tipped fountain pens were considered to be a status symbol. They were considered by some to be an art form, and they often liked showing them off, and now those pens have gone the way of doing math in your head, thanks to calculators. Now, every phone and computer comes with a calculator and the phones even memorize the phone numbers. When I was young, memorized the phone numbers, we

regularly used.

Time changes almost everything; I've noticed that the younger generation doesn't seem too keen on jewelry, being more interested in their personal character and the health of the earth, than the carat weight of worthless pieces of minerals and clear carbon. There's a good chance that abbreviated text messages and emails will replace the art of conversation; perchance the human race will regress into using only basic guttural sounds. Lastly, the desk clerk gave me directions to the nearest subway station, before I headed out the door, into the clamorous city.

The traffic conditions were just as the motel manager in Monterey had said they'd be...abysmal. And, the subways were indeed cheap and dependable. Moreover, a cab could be hailed from almost anywhere in the city, except for one all black district called, Tepito. There were various other black areas in the city, but Tepito, had something of a more notorious reputation, no whites or police allowed, and then there was its major drug dealing reputation.

Unlike big cities in the United States, the subways were never any problem, not once did I see

any sign of crime, when riding in them. The. I lived in MC, there were only about forty or fifty subway stations. Now, I've been told that there are twelve lines and about two hundred stations, but now, they're all firmly controlled by various drug gangs. American businessmen, who currently visit Mexico City, often do so under heavily armed security protection, and rarely if ever, take the subway. Moreover, many visiting business people are careful not to bring their families.

Their bodyguards are often former special ops guys, paid for by their companies, and sometimes said companies are owned by the CIA. Some big companies simply pay the gangs protection money to avoid the conflict. Drug gangs run almost every facet of Mexico's business and politics, including the president of Mexico, who is known for releasing drug cartel members, who've been captured by vigilantes in the state of Michoacán, and had been turned over to the police for prosecution.

Addicting drugs not only destroy the addicts, but sometimes dismantle entire cultures. Drugs not only cut the meat away from the bones, but bleach them clean and grind them to dust, to be scattered to the four winds. What might the world be like if the drug

lords were to completely succeed, and everyone became addicted... a world of addicts? How much money and misery would be enough for them? Why don't we just give the illegal drugs to those tested and found to be legitimate addicts, and thereby put the cartels out of business? Maybe it's not the money that matters, but more the adrenaline, produced by all the associated situations: muggings, bribes, murders, break-ins, prosecutions, prison time, parole, fines, court costs, ruined families, torturings, physical illnesses, mental illnesses, poverty, humiliation, divorces, premature aging, suicides, oceans of tears, withdrawals, etc.

When I arrived at the Mexico City's huge museum that sunny morning, I inquired about the price for admittance, and was told that it was free to the public. The building was huge, covering about twenty acres. So, I had decided I was going to wander around the expansive rooms, and just randomly gaze at the various exhibits; but, before I could take a step, a small older gentleman came walking up and introduced himself. *This guy no doubt wants money.* He was no more than five feet tall, likely less. Phenotypically, he appeared to be part Latino and part Mayan Indian. His reddish brown

skin, broad nose, wide kindly face, and perpetually happy expression seemed distinctly Mayan, but in his rather formal greeting, he seemed rather regal, like a formal Castilian. To me, most Mexicans with significant Mayan blood appear to be remarkably happy natured, and more apt to enjoy people. Oddly, the small man was dressed like he was an American businessman, straight out of the nineteen thirties, wearing an old fashion heavy brown tweed suit, with the ultra-wide lapels. His attire was clearly unseasonably warm, but the museum was overly air-conditioned. The gentleman carried a wooden gold-tipped cane, and seemed vaguely familiar, though I'd never before meant him.

His shirt was bleached white and the collar was clean, pressed, and heavily starched, but the frayed edges attested to years of use, as well as the frugality of the man. Recently polished ox blood wingtips covered his feet and his shockingly bright yellow socks matched his paisley yellow and brown tie. His watch, tie tack, glasses frames, and cuff links all appeared to be real gold, but the dark orangish hue of 18 to 24 carat.

The small man seemed not only theatrical but a tad surreal and out of time and place, like a fictitious

someone, who was actually living in the 1930s. He radiated with a certain persistent intimate intensity, almost demanding my undivided attention. It was like he was saying, 'I have something important to share with you, and no time to waste, so close pay attention to me!' After the introduction, he only asked me if I'd like a tour of the museum.

He inquired in perfect English, almost as if our very lives depended on my agreeing to take the tour. Incorrectly, I assumed the lectured excursion would cost me money, so I initially told him, 'no thanks.' Reading my thoughts, he smiled and said the tour was free, and began impatiently tapping his cane tip on the marble floor, so I accepted his generous offer. *Maybe the museum has hired this old man as a public service.* I'd soon learn, that assumption was wrong.

The little man proved to be an astute cultural and archeological authority, for there didn't seem to be a single curio, for which he wasn't well versed. Whatever item I pointed at, the man had considerable knowledge to impart, and even though he was obviously far more educated than I, he spoke to me as if we were old friends, or compatriots. There were thousands of archeological wonders in the museum, so we covered only a small percentage. The

tour lasted more than four hours; the older gentleman spent a half hour on a large craved stone called the *Aztec Calendar*. There were several different theories, concerning its various symbols and carvings. As he discussed each item, he'd mention, who'd unearthed it. When he spoke about the current authorities in archeology, he used their first names, as if he knew each one of them, and he'd point out where he thought that each authority might be correct or incorrect, concerning their cultural archeological theories.

The ancient Aztec calendar stone was also called, the *Sun Stone*, and had been serendipitously found, during the repair of one of the old Catholic cathedrals in Mexico City. That was an interesting coincidence, an ancient religious relic, being found during the repair of another old religious relic! Both of those religions are famous for causing the deaths of countless peoples. Their respective Gods actually didn't kill a soul, but their deluded followers, supposedly acting on their God's behalf, managed the deadly deeds. There's nothing quite like a psychopath acting with God's authority. Perchance in some way, by killing lots of people, it validates their belief, at least the way they want their God to be, a badass. If

the Sun God disappeared, life would cease to exist, if the Catholic God disappeared, probably not much would change, except there'd probably be more peace, and quite a few kids would remain unmolested.

Nowadays, I recall little about those roughly stone cut symbols, in the *Aztec Calendar*, except that the ugly face in its center was the face of Tonatiuh, the aforementioned God of heaven, the all important Sun God, whose tongue was sticking out of his mouth, ostensibly to signify that he wanted to be fed human hearts and blood; of course, like all religions, that was dreamed-up by some weird cruel humans, trying to control the masses. I like to think that the stone cutter constructed Tonatiuh with his tongue sticking out, to make fun of that portion of the human race that believed in Tonatiuh.

The aztec creation myth supposedly claimed that Tonatiuh required human sacrifice, or he'd stop moving through the sky... another threatening God. That's almost as ridiculous as the fact that the universe was made in seven days! How do we know this? Because the Bible says so. That clenches it. Some accounts say that roughly twenty-thousand people were scarified to the Sun God, each year, but

that's a drop in the bucket compared to the deaths due to wars started, or facilitated, by various modern religions. The more religious the follower, the more they seem to think it's okay to kill. They are not be pulling the trigger, but they support the politicians who tend to want war. Every religion harbors a bit of the bloody bizarre, if only, to provide the requisite fear for the unconvinced heathens... just another version of the old whip and carrot.

On the other hand, that twenty-thousand sacrificed people could have been an exaggeration by the Catholic Spanish, who were always quick to make the indigenous Indians appear as savages. Undoubtedly, the people who created that strange God, feared him and loved him much as is the case with any God. Many religions teach that wisdom is fearing God, but that God loves us, the way that you can never quite know where you stand. It sort of keeps the believer from going too far astray. God's wrath is the most sadistic thing imaginable... burning forever. What could be worse? For that reason alone (the burning forever gig) Christianity's and Islam's God truly seem the cruelest to me. They win. All the while, they claim to love people. The Aztecs believed in a hell with nine levels and a

heaven with twelve.

The brilliant little museum man in the tweed suit believed that the Aztec's commonly accepted personality traits, which would now be considered as psychiatric disorders. According to my museum guide, many murderers in the ancient aztec community were considered to be normal, and were publicly accepted. This is not too different from some of our better known politicians, who are famous for: starting unjust wars that kill countless souls, ordering drone and other air strikes slaughtering innocents in the process, mandating special ops kill missions, etc. Though you may not concur, only people with pathological egos can kill so many for financial gain, or can allow huge amounts of pollution to continue to be generated just for profit. This is not too different from the pharmaceutical companies, who refuse to manufacture cures, while they purposely manufacture expensive longterm treatments, and thousands of times the amount of addicting drugs, which could possibly be used legally.

Untalented and unloving people frequently see money as life's only genuine reward. Without any real talent or love what's left for them? Consequently, the rich tend to only care about and

respect the rich. When they run into someone, who's smarter or more talented, they like to think they can easily hire them with their wealth; and while that may be true, what they can't buy is a kinder heart or more intelligent creative brain. It really is true that some things money can't buy. There are some extremely good and intelligent rich people, but they tend to be the minority of the rich. Some rich believe they are more capable, than they actually are, simply because with their wealth they often can impress certain people.

From the way he talked and conducted the tour, you might have thought that the little man in the tweed suit had actually lived among the ancient Aztecs, for he not only talked about the leaders, but about some of the more common individuals, including their: deeds, customs, talents, fears, hopes, sexual habits, diets, etc. It was almost as if he might have lived with them. The tour guide was definitely a devoted archeological scholar. Some of the history he imparted, he claimed had been passed down by word of mouth, so I wondered about its accuracy, but often he would justify his assertions by things which were displayed in the museum.

“Just think Joey, when people lived off the

jungle, and on the vast desert plains of Mexico, the most proficient hunters, had to have been worshipped, for they fed the people, and they were typically natural born killers, and those killers were the backbone of their tribe often fighting and driving away other dangerous tribes. Considering the prevalence of warring tribes, the natural born killers were very much appreciated.” The older gent in the tweed suit instructed.

As the tweed man had described them, the killers were plainly dangerous psychopaths, especially since they’d periodically kill some innocent person, that they simply didn’t care for. Perchance to be a truly proficient hunter, one must love, or at minimum not mind, killing; at least, to some appreciable degree. For some, as well as for the little tweed man, it was but a small step from killing animals to killing humans. Then, I recalled hearing that typically men, who worked in slaughter houses, were more prone to murder. By the same token, today, hunters can frequently make the best soldiers.

According to the little tweed man, killers were often considered the most valuable people in the various ancient Indian tribes. Today, some people think that by the police arresting them and the

judges executing them, that one day there will be fewer killers. Not likely, since there is a little killer in each man, and it just may be the case that psychopaths procreate more, so when they're not locked away in some jail or prison, they're engaging in more sex, and therefore making more babies, with a propensity for psychopathology. The personalities of killers are often more appealing to certain types of the fairer sex; perchance, because of a biochemical-behavioral relationship. With higher levels of testosterone, the greater the propensity for violence and killing, as well as the greater the male's sex drive. A greater sex drive means increased probability of offspring; DNA's primary concern is self propagation, hence the woman may gravitate to criminal males. Such women often cling to the foolish assumption that they can change them, whenever they need to. Again, such dangerous males may have been the strength of a tribe, which was in conflict with other tribes. Perchance, this is not too different from why certain aggressive criminals were granted release from criminal prosecution or prison by their presiding judge, with the caveat that the defendant agreed to consignment into the US Army or US Marine Corps.

The tweed man also claimed that the manic and hyperactive people (ADD and ADHD), who are now viewed in our schools as being troublesome ill-behaved children, were then revered by the people of the tribe, because they were often the hyper-vigilant, and the apt to detect unseen dangers, and acutely aware of impending weather changes.

Corresponding, they were more likely to find available sources of game, food, and water. The hyperactive and highly strung manic people were considered to be assets to the tribe, and major contributors to the tribe's survival, so their hyperactivity and energetic personalities were to be tolerated and respected. Even certain of the people, who are now said to be autistic are hyper vigilant and therefore they were considered to be an asset. The best tribes had a vast variety of people... genetic diversity has it advantages, as well as its disadvantages.

Currently, people such as the psychopaths, the hyperactive, and the manic peoples are considered little more than troublesome and problematic. We execute or imprison many of the psychopaths, and medicate many of the manic and hyperactive children, so they can sit in school all day, without

disturbing the rest of the class. Long ago, no tribal child would have been made to sit for eight hours in school. Common sense might say that attending eight hours of school is anything but natural for a child, and yet we expect children to do just that, Perhaps, this is because we expect them to work at least eight hours a day, when they reach adulthood.

The little tweed man also mentioned that while the hallucinating schizophrenics are now often locked away or drugged-up, back then, the tribe looked out for them, and closely listened to them for insights, which might have been woven within their fearful delusions. The tribes felt they were possessed by spirits to be learned from. Still, if the schizophrenic became too difficult, they were banished, or sacrificed. How and when that was done was determined by the priests.

Many of the aged tweed man's comments made sense. Later, I'd learn that the country of Australia was originally populated by British and Irish criminals, although a few were just debtors, but a fair percentage were likely psychopaths and other people with various mental aberrations. Their genes now reside in most of Australians of today, and Australia is one of the most culturally advanced and

economically thriving nations on earth. In the 17th and 18th centuries, about fifty-thousand criminals were transported to prison colonies on that continent. The British also used America as an early penal colony. Merchants would ship convicts to the colonies and auction them off to plantation owners, as slaves. More than fifty-thousand were auctioned, more than twenty-five percent of all the immigrants were classified as convicts, during the eighteenth century. America is now the most powerful (militarily and economically) nation on earth, but we lock-up a greeter percentage of our population than any other country on the planet, and our military is second to none in the art of killing overseas (terrorist and innocents). Certain nucleotide sequences of DNA have a way of clawing and killing their way to the top.

The little tweed man went so far as to give actual examples of historical Indian figures with pathological traits, and how the Aztec mind varied significantly from the mind of the other Indian tribes, such as the more kindly analytical Mayans. He implied that the Mayans and Aztecs were largely polar opposites, good and evil, cultured and uncivilized, etc. The Aztecs were all about power and

conquest, whereas the Mayans were the early scientists and for the most part pacifist. The little tweed man said something about each of us being part Aztec and part Mayan. He also made it clear, that the desire to kill was predominantly a male trait. Later, I came to think that the associated killing/aggressive genes were predominately located somewhere on the 'Y' chromosome.

<http://www.pnas.org/content/106/7/2118.short>

Once we were done touring the museum, I thanked the gentleman and handed him two ten dollar bills. Surprisingly, he made me take one back, then he thanked me, and I thanked him twice. He smiled and slowly ambled-off tapping his gold tipped cane, back into the seemingly endless bowels of the museum. The passion that the old man had exhibited was nothing short of overwhelming. He was old, yet had tried so very hard to awaken an intellectual interest in me. His protracted intense presentation had obviously fatigued the august gentleman. *It has to be hard on such an old guy, working for tips.* I headed toward the museum's exit.

A janitor, who had seen me walking around with the old tour guide, was cleaning the lobby carpet with a boxy old Bissell push carpet sweeper on it noisy rollers. Strolling over, I asked him about what there might be to do for fun in the nearby areas of the city. But before answering my question, the janitor asked me in English, if I knew whom my tour guide had been.

“No, but I think his name was Alberto something. He seemed like a smart man, pretty intense, but very nice.” For some reason, this answer seemed to irritate the janitor.

“That man is not a tour guide! He is the most famous professor of archeology in all of Mexico and South America. He is like a God in this museum!” The janitor proclaimed, while intensely frowning at me.

“You have got to be kidding. Why would such a highly accomplished man serve as a humble tour guide, working only for tips, and why didn’t he charge a fee for such a great presentation?” I asked.

“That’s just it; that man with the cane is not some tour guide. He never has been a tour guide, at least not before you came along, today. You were his

first tourist. He simply decided to do you a favor. Not even his students receive such a courtesy, as he just bestowed on you. The museum pays him for his expert advice. They pay that little man big money! A lot of the exhibits in here, he dug-up. He's a wealthy man, has several published books on archeology! That little man is like the father of this museum and teaches at the University, here in the city." The janitor spoke the words, as if, he was angry with me. *Why is he mad at me?*

"The man was extremely knowledgeable, but he probably wasted his time on me." I answered, shrugging my shoulders, and trying to placate the irate janitor, but my words only seemed to further annoy him.

Years later, I'd retire from research to teach over thirty-thousand students anatomy and physiology, and only wish that I had half the inspiration that the old tour guide had displayed that afternoon in the museum. For some unknown reason, the professor had decided to give me a professional gift. At that time in my foolish young life, I didn't quite know what to think of that old man, but I do somewhat now. While the information itself, made no lasting impression on me, the old guy's intellectual passion

did. Later, I would acquire that intense desire to learn and understand, but in a different field.

The professor had found his niche in life, something which had clearly stimulated his mind and gave him a sense of purpose, something which awakened a natural curiosity within him, and for some reason he had been doing his best to awaken that spark of intellectual curiosity in me. He had acquired so many memories: archeological, historical, psychiatric, social, cultural, etc., in the circuitry of his hippocampi, that the subject matter had seemingly come alive, as if he had actually lived amongst the ancient peoples. Likely he'd attained the 'zen' of his expertise, for that is all zen is... the creation and activation of a certain number of well rehearsed neural circuits!

With enough memories/circuits, be they from reading or studying, or from practicing something (archery, swimming, piano playing, typing, pitching a baseball, tennis, praying, etc.) to acquire the necessary cognitive and/or motor (muscle movement) skills, the person may eventually reach the state called, 'zen.' Countless numbers of people have written about zen, as if it is something mysterious; how it is attained, and how it feels to

have secured it. But all it is, is a matter of focused redundancy, until a certain number of memories/neural circuits have been laid down in the brain. Motor memories (memories of how to move one's muscles) are stored in circuits of the cerebellum of the brain, and more intellectual memories in those of the hippocampi, within the brain's temporal lobes.

In this respect, zen is like anything else. If you attend church enough and read the associated holy books long and often enough, so you acquire the memories, the religion will seem to come alive... zen! Zen is a burning passion of interest born of persistent study or repetition of a certain types of information, events, motor skills, etc., which can be highly varied in each person. For some people, it may be intense study and reading in some field, be it: religion, medicine, engineering, or astrophysics, comedy, science fiction, etc. In others, their brain may be better designed for the zen of motor skills: tennis, football, archery, golf, soccer, lacrosse, skydiving, etc. Moreover, depending of the effort and genetics of the individual the quality of said zen (level of mastery) may vary, significantly. What the little man at the museum did succeed in doing was to allow me to see what it was like to possess and enjoy

an intense intellectual interest, an intellectual passion, the zen of intellectualism. His presentation later served to inspire me, and so as the years passed, my envy of the little guy's fervor grew. *He's so lucky to intellectually enjoy something so much.* The idea of having a true intellectual interest fascinated me, and awoke something in me, but it didn't fully sputter to life for about seven more years, not till I meant an old scientist, while eating in a popular cafe, in Boulder, Colorado.

The janitor just stood there and shook his head, probably bewildered that the tweed man had bestowed a gift on someone, who certainly didn't appreciate it; not to mention that I was a gringo. When I again questioned the janitor what there was to do for fun in MC, he pointed out the front doors to a large grassy field directly across the street.

"If you want something to do, just walk over there. That grassy area is a small part of *Chapultepec Park*. It's mostly a jungle. There are lots of young people about your age. I'm sure you will find something to do, over there." He responded. *He hates me because I'm a waste, and he's not wrong.*

Thanking the young janitor, I headed across the street to the sprawling park, still thinking about the

mysterious little oddly dressed older tour guide with his ever tapping cane. To this day, I recall little about what he told me, and although he talked about archeology, an area which holds little fascination for me, in a genuine manner, he had laid the foundation for my later interest in, and study of neurophysiology. He'd made me want to have an intellectual interest.

After meeting the older gentleman, I periodically felt the need for having an academic fascination, something which I could be cognitively passionate about, a field in which I could apply my meager intellect. The kindly gentleman had attempted to ignite the fire of natural curiosity within me, which clearly burned like the sun, in him. Yet at the time, my gray mush was too burned-out, too scattered, and too hyper, to devote myself to a time consuming intellectual endeavor. In spite of that, he did so make an impression on me.

Leaving the museum, I wandered south across the street to the expansive park, roughly 1600 acres, and it's situated within the western central part of the metropolis, which covers more than 570 square miles (even now New York City is bare over 300 square miles), and MC is well over a mile high in

altitude, and yet it is sinking faster than Venice, because it's built on a high altitude lake. When I was there, much of the park was wild jungle, only without the larger animals, and it was surrounded on all sides by the bustling city. In those days, the park contained a few lakes, countless winding paths, as well as lots of birds, squirrels, frogs, rabbits, snakes, lizards, and a plethora of insects, including the dangerous black widow, the brown recluse, and the hobo spider. There was also a zoo in the park. Later, I'd spend many hours in the black of night sitting in that park, but first I'd carefully check the area for the poisonous spiders, before sitting down to work.

After leaving the museum, I crossed the street, walking into a twenty acre grassy field. On Google Earth the once green field now appears to be a lake, and where there was nothing but jungle, there is now scrub trees, and many little buildings and houses, as if the city's encroaching into the jungle. The mystique of the dense jungle park appears to have mostly vanished, since the density of the foliage is nothing compared to when I was there... just one more minor aspect of man's never ending war against mother nature.

Off to one side of the grassy field was a small

outdoor stone amphitheater, apparently where concerts and plays were conducted. The large semicircle of elevated stone seats had been carved out of the side of a low rocky hill, in front of a raised stone stage, measuring approximately a forty by twenty foot, elevated about three feet above the ground. Lately, I've tried to find images of the stone amphitheater online, but have been unsuccessful, so perhaps, like the aforementioned field, and much of the jungle, it's also vanished. One day, except for large bodies of water, the entire earth may be practically covered in concrete and asphalt... that's real progress for you! Even if global warming were a hoax, which in my opinion it's definitely not, why not preserve the environmental health of the planet?

Coincidentally, the creation of concrete accounts for about five percent of the global warming. Judging from the smell of fresh asphalt, it can't be too good for the atmosphere, nor can it be too healthy. Lord knows that the fumes smell toxic. The energy used to make asphalt and concrete, and the greenhouse gas emissions are patently bad.

<https://www.aexcelcorp.com/blog/eco-friendly-traffic-paint/3-ways-asphalt-and-concrete-are->

affecting-the-planet

That day in *Chapultepec Park*, I was fantasizing about running across some beautiful sexy Mexican girl all by herself; but sadly, the populace that afternoon was confined to couples, picnicking families, and kids playing soccer, and so I just moseyed over to the aforementioned outdoor amphitheater, and sat up in the empty stone stands. Soon bored, I was thinking about leaving to find some food, then something completely unexpected happened.

From where I sat, a couple hundred yards to my left was the museum; in front of me, beyond the outdoor stage, was the populated grassy field, with all the picnicking families, and strolling couples. To my right and behind me was the thick tropical jungle of the immense *Chapultepec Park*. Soon I'd be using that jungle for my office and storehouse. Later, I was told that 'Chapultepec,' in the language of the ancient Aztecs, meant 'at the grasshopper's hill.' The ancient peoples used to call the rock formation in the center of the park... 'grasshopper's hill.' That's about where I'd cut-up my brick of hash into grams, and bag my kilos of weed into ounces.

Perchance, back in those bygone times, there had been a lot of grasshoppers in that area, which was easy to believe, considering the grasshopper storms, I'd driven through that night on my way to Monterey. Or, maybe it was called that, because one of the giant rocks in the park looked slightly like a huge grasshopper, but very slightly. As it would later turn-out, I would spend many hours in that park, late at night, and even though there were many other insects in the park, I don't recall seeing a single grasshopper. Perchance, the ancient Indians did some mescaline (peyote cactus) and/or psilocybin (psilocybe mexicana mushroom), and hallucinated a giant grasshopper, while tripping their brains out in what is now the park. After all, those particular species of cacti and mushrooms grew all over Mexico. Often, I've wondered how much various hallucinogenic plants, as well as schizophrenia, have played a role into the development of various religions. In the new testament, attention is given to the verses concerned with presumed voice-hearing experiences of Jesus, Peter, Paul, and John (the author of Revelation). Schizophrenics mostly suffer with auditory hallucinations, rather than visual ones. Correspondingly, hallucinogens are famous for causing schizophrenia, since the voices are often

highly stressful, and stress either brings-on schizophrenia, or exacerbates it. Just read any holy text and it's hard not to imagine that certain peoples weren't deranged or tripping on something... all those references to: angels, demons, God(s), devils, spirits, ghosts, etc. After all, religious characters and deities from various holy texts are quite common in the millions of hallucinations of the world's fifty-million schizophrenics. Later, I'd work in a psych ward, and come to realize that a fair percentage of the delusions and hallucinations of the schizophrenic patients, involved religious-based delusions. What this means is that lots of insane people are afraid of religion, most probably because it includes the possibility of going to hell, and burning, but just for eternity.

Antsy to do something, hungry, and filled with youthful energy, I was just about to leave the park to go grab some chow, when suddenly, from the adjacent dense foliage of the jungle, three Mexican males in their mid twenties came running out, and leaped up onto the amphitheater's stone stage, directly in front of me. *What the hell are they doing?* The three guys had launched into an imaginary dramatic sword fight. The first one fell to an invisible

sword thrust to the midsection, then after a few moments, down went another, from an imaginary slice to the throat. The survivor of the mock battle turned toward me, and gave me a sweeping theatrical bow, while the other two were getting to their feet. It was a performance you'd never have suspected the members of a Mexican street-gang to do. Later, I'd learn that the victor, who'd bowed, was the leader of a gang.

The three guys belonged to a small street gang, composed of about twenty young men, ages twenty-two to thirty-five years, collectively known as, *Las Piedras*. Jogging down the steps, I jumped up on the stage, and thanked the three of them for their magnificent show. They could tell I was an American, and asked me why I was in MC, so to save a lot of awkward rhetoric, I simply said I was a tourist. They then asked me, whom I was with, and I foolishly said no one. It wasn't hard to tell that they were stoned, their eyes were red and the lids at half mast. Their pupils were slightly dilated, which meant they were also on something besides weed, or perhaps the weed was treated with something. This immediately reminded me that I needed to be exceedingly polite. There are some strains of marijuana, which actually

constrict the pupil, much as an opiate might do. That's made me wonder, if someone has managed to gene splice a couple of plants, opium-pot, peyote-pot, mushroom-pot, etc. How hard could it be? Isolate the genes responsible for the psychotropics of each plant, and put them in common plants, which don't contain toxins, such as: azalea bushes, lawn grass, wire grass, etc.

Smiling, I raised my eyebrows, so they sensed that I knew they were baked, ergo we all laughed. A weed smoker can usually spot another weed smoker. Without the slightest hesitation, the three said that if I wanted to smoke a little ganja to follow them, and they turned and began to run back into the thick verdant jungle. With nothing better to do, I ran to join them. About three hundred yards in the dense foliage of the jungle, we came upon a large thirty foot tall pile of a few hundred cut logs, all cut equal lengths. Each log was about forty feet in length, with the girth of your standard telephone pole, though not as smooth, nor were they chemically treated, and so, were not destined to last, and eventually go to rot. The raw untreated logs formed a completely disorganized heap, composed of two or three hundred of them. The cut, trimmed, and debarked

logs seemed to be totally out of place, since none of the surrounding trees appeared to have been cut; no tree stumps were in sight. *How did these logs get here?*

The logs seemed to have been brought in and dumped in the jungle, yet there was no road, nearby. The three strong athletic guys began to climb-up the monumental log pile, and I carefully followed. Once we'd ascended to the top of the log mountain, I could see that in its core the interior of the haphazard assemblage of timber was somewhat hollow and empty, a chamber or makeshift room in its interior, with a shaded packed dirt floor. The four of us then shinnied and slid down two nearly vertical logs, onto the cool dirt floor, below.

Once comfortable seated on the tightly packed cool soil, the tallest of the three young men and the apparent leader, introduced himself as Esteban. Almost formally, we all exchanged first names; Esteban, Manuel, and Pepe, each shook my hand. The leader then moved back in a small recessed alcove within the interior space, and there he dug-up a sandwich-sized plastic bag, containing about an ounce or two of aromatic weed with a few large buds, a pack of Zig-Zags, and a small box of strike-anywhere matches. Zig-Zag papers, which were made

in the United States, sold for half the price in Mexico. Of course, weed was cheaper in Mexico. At the time, the best weed going, was 'Acapulco Gold.' A pound of the herb was cheaper in Mexico, than was an ounce in the United States.

Sharing the weed was Esteban's effort at cordial camaraderie. For the next little while, the four of us relaxed, laid back against the logs, passed around a couple of firmly rolled dobbies, and proceeded to get plowed. It was some of the best dope I'd ever smoked, and thanks to Margo, and my many trips to New Orleans, I'd smoked many varieties. It felt wonderful to be getting stoned in some place other than oppressive old Mobile. Once stoned, the jungle park took on a larger more ominous perspective. It might as well have been the Amazon rainforest. My awareness seemed to move outward, and I became more aware of the log pile and the sounds, and smells of the surrounding environment.

Unlike most of the people, that I'd smoked with in Mobile, the three gang members were not easily given to lengthy self-important discussions. During the months that I would know them, most of their discussions were designed to help and encourage each other, not to self aggrandize. Often when I was

among young Americans and blasted on weed, I would have chosen not to have talked, but my American friends, as well as my good wife, considered lengthy conversations something of a social obligation. When not stoned, I do very much enjoy a good conversation, but kush afforded me fairly delightful internal entertainment in the form of beautiful hallucinations; hence for me, conversation tended to blemish the high. Feeling good, I just leaned back against the logs, and enjoyed the animal sounds of the jungle park. Unexpectedly, Esteban made the odd comment that the Aztecs believed that the greater the number of frog sounds, the more babies that would be born.

Apparently, he thought there existed a relationship between the prevalence of frogs and human fertility. *Some ancient myths still exists.* Though such an hypothesis may seem silly, some myths in nature are indeed verifiable. For example, more frogs might have meant more food for birds and reptiles, which in turn, might translate into more food for predatory mammals, and therefore more food for humans. Hence, more energy, so more egg, sperm, and more corresponding copulation, and as a result, more babies being born. Being stoned, that bio-

behavioral perspective seemed somewhat staggering. Somethings seem interestingly coincident, when it fact, everything is... it's all just atoms bumping into atoms. In science, you're taught not to accept an argument just because it is suggested, but nor should it be rejected, because it hasn't been confirmed, but it should be held in reserve, in case it matches-up with later findings.

Down inside the pile of logs, with the back of my head comfortably cradled between two vertically placed logs, listening to various animal sounds in the park, I recalled the relationship of the great (really bad) bubonic plagues and the major cyclic bursts of sunspots. Sunspots follow a known, fairly dependable periodicity, due to repetitious energy events and magnetic shifts, within the sun. There's an eleven year short cycle, but then there's a much longer cycle, as well.

The magnetic flux, and corresponding increased release of photonics (light energy... photons... particles of light), results in more light energy hitting the earth, causing greater plant growth. Increases in plant pheromones, given-off by the faster growing plants, stimulate olfactory receptors in the noses of the rodents, which in turn, stimulates the release of

certain hormones from their pituitary glands, thereby increasing rodent fertility (more sperm, more ova), and more and larger litters are born. Obviously, more rodents means more fleas, and since the fleas are the primary plague vector/carrier, more bubonic plague. So sunspots and bubonic plagues correlate nicely... what a coincidence. Sun spots and plagues have both been recorded, since before Christ. The eleven year sunspot cycle is also associated with influenza outbreaks. Increased plant material could likely mean increases in many of the types of animals which are the carriers of influenza ducks, chickens, pigs, whales, horses, seals, felines, etc. Again, all things are coincidental.

[https://www.iasj.net/iasj?
func=fulltext&aId=90874](https://www.iasj.net/iasj?func=fulltext&aId=90874)

[http://www.nytimes.com/1990/01/25/us/flu-
time-when-the-sunspots-are-jumping.html](http://www.nytimes.com/1990/01/25/us/flu-time-when-the-sunspots-are-jumping.html)

The four of us just relaxed and listened to the myriad of mysterious jungle sounds. Besides the frog sounds, the air was filled with diverse species of bird songs and calls. But, according to Esteban, some of

the strangest sounds I was hearing were being made by the various types of frogs, which I wrongly assumed were birds. Without extended conversation, as the animal sounds were being made, Esteban would tell me which sounds were frogs, and which were birds. Manuel and Pepe fell asleep. After a while, it became evident which of the many animal sounds were calling to and answering each other. Esteban also claimed that occasionally a bird would try to mimic a frog to make the frog respond and reveal itself, so that the bird could then locate and eat the frog. Still, the bird had to know which frog to eat, since some were poisonous. Esteban began to imitate one particular bird, which had not been receiving a reply to its occasional call.

The gang leader raised his index finger to garner my attention, then periodically whistling, he established a communication link with the bird, and a minute or two later, the bird landed on a branch, directly above the opening in our log compartment. The fairly large black and white bird, with an extra long tail, twisted its head and looked down, seeming to study us with its left eye, then realizing it had been hoodwinked, the bird flew away. While I suppose this is no big deal, when stoned I found it to

be immensely interesting. Being entertained by those animal sounds was something I didn't expect a young gang members to be entertained by; yet, two of these three friendly men would soon stab a man to death, while I was choking him out. Some things which are fairly unexceptional can often take on a profound significance when stoned. For a long while, our only focus was the wildlife sounds, and I found myself drifting in and out of sleep. It felt great to be out of Mobile!

After a while, the three gang members inquired about where I was from in the United States, and why I'd come to Mexico. While they hadn't heard of Mobile, Alabama, when I said it was a city very close to Florida, the guys had clearly heard of Florida. They seemed genuinely shocked, when I said that I really wasn't a tourist, but had come there, because I was bored with my life in Mobile. Oddly, they laughed long and hard at that truth. All three assumed that the United States was a virtual paradise, and couldn't imagine someone being bored, who was living there. When Manuel laughed, the left side of his face seemed to fold onto itself, due to a rather noticeable deep and long scar, running from the angle of his jaw to nearly his left nostril. Having

been severely wounded, apparently the facial muscles no longer functioned properly. Nevertheless, the crippled smile was far more genuine, than the previously mentioned smile of the purple robed *KKK* man in the canvas circus tent. The three guys questioned me about the size of Mobile, the type of people who lived there, the nearby beaches, the girls, my wife, my newspaper job, and what my life was like. They could have been fooling me, but they seemed to express a sincere interest. Taking a genuine interest in another person's life was more a Mexican, than an American thing.

During this conversation, I lied and made it seem that I barely had enough money to buy food, and since I was dressed poorly, I think they believed me. In turn, I politely asked them questions about themselves. The questions were not meant to be impolitely invasive, but merely to extend a cordial complimentary interest. Each of the three guys worked some type of menial job, none had graduated from high school, and while they had come from biological families, the gang was apparently their first-line family, ergo it was like I was speaking with three brothers. Never did I mention having a college degree, and told them that my job didn't pay enough

to live-on, and so I sold a little weed on the side. Being a military brat had taught me the art of fitting-in with various cultures and socioeconomic groups.

Looking at our haphazard log enclosure, I asked why such a huge pile of logs was out in the middle of the jungle, when there were no cut trees, in the vicinity. Esteban explained that, a couple of years prior, the city fathers had decided to build a replica of some early historical log house in the park, which had once been the residence of a famous Mexican priest, once revered by many as a saint. The original house had been burned, during the bloody revolution of 1910 to 1920. Certain city groups had blocked the building effort to build the replica house, but the logs had already been delivered... something about politics, and a disagreement about which company was going to be allowed to actually do the construction.

With the election of a new city mayor, so ended the construction of the house. Politics has a way of taking precedence over good judgement, in so many ways. Esteban commented that the logs were now his gang's jungle hideout, and that he was the mayor of *Chapultepec Park*. It may sound strange, but while the hollow mound of logs was a peaceful and

comfortable place to relax, I'd also visit it repeatedly in the very near future, during the black of night, to prepare my nefarious dope business products, for sale the next day.

Still stoned, the four of us decided to go for another run through the jungle. Once outside the pile of logs, without discussion, we spontaneously began to run, and we probably ran for a few miles, through the trees, as well as along the park's many winding paths. We even ran past some sort of massive stone castle, sitting upon a high rocky bluff in the middle of the park. The bluff had been a sacred place for the ancient Aztecs, and the castle has served several purposes, including that of a Military Academy, an Imperial residence, a Presidential home, and an observatory. Now, said castle-like structure is Mexico's National Museum of History. Later, I'd frequently use the castle as a late night landmark to help find the pile of logs, and to locate my buried drug stashes.

We were high on some kick-ass weed, running for the pleasure of running, aware only of the jungle, each other's position, our foot placement on the jungle floor, our sweating and breathing, and the synchrony of our pounding hearts and strides. We

ran abreast of each other, with Esteban on one end and me on the other. Manuel and Pepe, were between us. We were spread out, so there was about thirty or so feet between each of us, lopping along like a pack of wolves. No one wanted to stop running. Weed can intensify the simplest of things! The beauty of running was always there to be had, but kush just allowed me to better enjoy it. We were running for running's sake. After a while, we popped out of the dense jungle, dropping down a three foot concrete wall, and onto a sidewalk, and so suddenly we were back in the city; still, no one wanted to end the run. We just kept racing along, weaving in and out through the cars and groups of people, down though small streets, alleyways, and sidewalks. In the city, we followed Esteban, but ran at various positions and distances away from him, not in a line. After a while, to my surprise, we arrived at Esteban's apartment; it was a small place, only a few steps up from the sidewalk.

Once up on his small concrete portico, we opened the screen door and the main door, then stepped into the apartment. Just before entering, I noticed that fifty yards down the street, but on the opposite side, was what looked like a tempting tiny

Chinese carryout. I say tempting, because the wonderful smells of the greasy cooking were drifting up the street, causing my mouth to reflectively fill with saliva, but I just swallowed, and politely stepped into Esteban's apartment. Not having eaten that day, and having run for several miles, while high on weed, made it nearly impossible for me to ignore the nearby Chinese carryout, yet out of courtesy, I respectfully entered, thanking him for inviting me.

Once inside, I smelled the odor of cheap sweet incense and noticed the stark absence of any kind of furniture. Instead, there were only several thin twin mattresses, scattered about the creaky wooden living room floor. By the window, was a cut-rate red and black box-like record player, made out of compressed paper, and a few electronic circuits, housing a small speaker. There was a short stack of 45 rpm records, next to it on the floor. Manuel began to search through the 45s. Next to it, was a black and gold plastic battery-powered transistor AM-FM radio, about the size of a cereal box. The next day, I purchased my own transistor radio for my rented room. In the months which followed, I'd periodically listen to a couple of English-speaking Texas radio

stations, which played jazz and rock. US stations which broadcast far into Mexico were called 'border blasters.' The main purpose of the border blasters was to broadcast US news into Mexico. I'm sure there were various political reasons for that. Both Esteban's radio and mine possessed only two round flat plastics dials with ribbed edges: the large one for tuning in the stations, and a smaller one to turn it on and off, as well as to control the volume. Esteban's cheap little radio sported a six foot, telescoping, slightly bent, chrome-plated antenna, extending toward the window for better reception.

The colorful boxy 45 record player, together with the plastic transistor radio was considered to be a fairly sophisticated entertainment center, for your average young Mexican, at least back then. For the most part, a television and a phone was something only the rich Mexicans owned. The gang perceived the record player and the radio, much as people might now gaze upon the latest computer gaming system, and a giant high quality flat screen TV. Across the room was an old fashioned tall lamp with three glaring bulbs, but without the benefit of a shade. The place was strictly bare bones, but still the thin mattresses seemed inviting, after the long run.

Pepe had already laid down on one mattress, and appeared to be headed for dreamland. There were about ten such twin mattresses on the floor, serving as furniture. There was not a chair, or couch, nor a table anywhere in the place.

Momentarily, Esteban sat up on the mattress, trying to select a station on the radio. I was seated across the room, and when he saw me looking around the room, he actually apologized for his unfurnished place. His apology embarrassed me, and I realized that I had probably been looking forlornly around the apartment. Instantly, I employed my prevarication skills, and calmly countered by thanking him for having me, telling him that his tiny apartment was much larger and nicer than my small house in Mobile. Continuing with the lie, I told him that Margo and I had been saving money hoping to one day to afford a new radio. I felt that my lie had been convincing, but in response, he gave me a skeptic narrowing gaze. As he squinted and placed his lower lip between his teeth, and narrowed the slit between the lids of one eye, it was clear he was somewhat doubting my lie, and was not accustomed to receiving such consideration, at least not from an American. He nodded his head and again stretched

out on his mattress. I couldn't stop thinking about the Chinese carryout just down the street. Laying on my mattress, I'd periodically catch a whiff of the food, and it was making my stomach growl. Besides it wasn't long and Manuel, Pepe, Esteban, and I fell asleep. It was as if those three guys had instantly become my friends, as if they were people I'd known for years.

But the sleep didn't last long. Without knocking, a couple of girls walked-in, smiling and laughing, and we all listened to music and smoked some more weed, which the girls had brought with them. Pepe and one girl retired to the only small bedroom, and closed the door. The other girl laid beside Manuel, and went to sleep. Later, I came to realize that the females affiliated with Mexican gangs were not like some people might think. They were actually very loving people, who tended to be supportive of the guys in the group, and I don't mean that in a sexual or slutty manner, but of course, sex was in the offing. While each girl did tend to form a close attachment with a particular male, they were also like sisters, or very close friends to the other guys. The gang was close-knit.

It seemed that the two principal reasons for their

earnest and supportive natures was that for all their lives, both the male and females, had been forced to confront the stresses of poverty, and the second reason was that other neighboring gangs were an ever present danger, as I was soon to find-out. Besides being a family, the gang represented security, but for me the gang also represented an unforeseen danger.

The Americanized portion of my musical brain found it difficult, if not impossible, to get into Esteban's Mexican tunes. Early in life, I'd been hardwired for classical, rock and roll, jazz, and blues. People tend to believe that the music they love, should be loved by everyone. There's nothing quite as jarring as getting in the car with someone, and they turn-on the radio to play their irritating tunes at a thousand decibels, and wrongly assume you'll enjoy it, as they do. After everyone appeared to be stoned and asleep, I ducked outside and walked down the street to the aforementioned Chinese carry-out.

The little Asian carry-out was filled with traditional Mariachi music, which drove me insane. The air was awash in cooking grease, and the shelves were filled with many things: hundreds of 45 rpm

records in plain white sleeves, posters, perfumes and colognes, toiletry items, various types of incense, pocket knives, ceramic crosses, lots of candles, crosses for the wall, rosaries (plastic, wooden, stone, pearl, metal, glass, etc.) homemade and commercial soap, dishwashing liquid, laundry powder, cosmetics, cheap plastic shoes, t-shirts, socks, etc. Hunger clawed at the walls of my stomach. When the Asian clerk was taking an order, I ducked into the restroom, stripped naked and hurriedly washed off in their sink, using soap, and several paper towels to dry off.

Coming out of the bathroom, I sprayed-on one of the free samples of men's cologne. Before leaving, I bought six nickel beers for the group and myself, and a small chocolate bar. Exiting the place, I'd hurriedly wolfed down the chocolate, with enough saliva for a six course meal. Back at Esteban's, I was repeatedly thanked for the small gesture of beer. Those guys were nothing like the Latin gangs, you now read about in LA; nothing like those gangs members, you saw in *Training Day*. Forcefully, I sloshed the beer around in my mouth to make sure there was no chocolate remaining on my teeth, or on my breath. Stoned and exhausted, I felt that I was about to

digest myself from the inside out. The chocolate had helped, but not nearly enough. Desperately, I wanted a real meal, but had I bought food for myself, I knew I'd have to buy food for everyone, and being uncertain about my finances, I was determined to conserve my money. I'd only brought five hundred dollars into Mexico, and after the night stay in Monterey, the tacos for the Ford mechanics, the train ride to MC, my hotel room, and food, I was down to four hundred and forty dollars. *What am I going to do, if I run out of money?* More people began arriving in the apartment, happily most were females.

Sitting on the bare mattress, propped-up against the wall, sipping my beer, the only thing that distracted me from my hunger was a beautiful girl across the room, also sitting on a mattress and propped-up against the wall but by the radio. The looks I received from her were tough to read. One moment, I thought I saw the green light, then the next second, she looked annoyed. Besides, for all I knew, she was spoken for by someone else in *Las Piedras*, and I definitely wasn't up for getting crosswise with the group. Considering her beauty, it was hard to imagine that she wasn't already attached to one of the guys, for she was a serious temptation,

indeed. After a bit, there were a total of about eighteen people there. With the tiresome music, all the weed smoke, and the stifling air, I felt the need to get outside, so I decided to forget the usual protocol, and again, I headed for the door and the irresistible Chinese carry-out. At Esteban's I'd heard a couple of the folks asking if anyone had any cigarettes, and apparently no one did, so to be polite and to get some fresh air, I got up and headed out the door to buy some smokes for the group. After all the free weed I'd smoked, I figured it was the least I could do, besides a pack of American brand cigarettes was far cheaper in Mexico. Back then, American cigarettes were about one-tenth the price, which they were in the states (15 cents per pack), and the American tobacco companies were still making a good profit, even though they had to truck them far down into Mexico. Every addiction is big business.

It's still that way, today; American companies over charging Americans for nearly everything. One day in the near future, cigarettes will average \$10 per pack. The American drug companies do the same thing, selling their drugs for far less money in third world countries, and yet the drug companies have the added cost of shipping their drugs overseas. All

the while, the drug companies charge their fellow Americans monstrously inflated prices. The mark-up on pharmaceuticals runs anywhere from 500 to 50,000 percent. A script of the antibiotic Augmentin costs roughly nine dollars in Thailand, whereas in the United States, it is around one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and again the drug had to be shipped to Thailand. These practices and other medical policies will ultimately drive America into the arms of socialized medicine. It's the only way to make medicine humane, and to motivate the research community to come-up with viable cures, rather than prolonged non-curative expensive daily, weekly, and/or monthly treatments. Alpha interferon cost practically nothing to make, but the drug companies charge about \$350 per drop. The drug is literally excreted by bacteria. One thing which might Americans consider that we need to focus on vaccines and curative medicine, is a good old fashion pandemic, which kills an appreciable percentage of its' victims. You can bet that such a world-wide plague will eventually come from either Africa (bush meat) or China (colds and flus).

As I crossed the room, and before leaving Esteban's apartment to go get the smokes, I raised my

eyebrows and tossed a hopeful glance at the beautiful girl, and blessedly, she got-up, walked over to me, and grabbed my hand to accompany me, as if we'd already discussed leaving together. Her touch and beauty staggered my dope-filled mind. She chuckled at my pleasant shock, and spoke an odd little opening line.

"I'm Rosa, and I'm my own woman." She announced with a smiling wink and a little hop in her step.

"Hey, I'm Joey and I'm my own man, unless you want me; then, I'm yours." For that silly comment, I received a magnificent expansive smile.

"We'll see Gringo. Maybe I could use a man. You're not Jewish are you?" She strangely inquired. *I don't look Jewish, or do I?*

"I'm just a plain Gringo, with ancestors from everywhere." I figured she had dated a Jewish guy, and perchance things hadn't gone so well.

"Everywhere?" She asked.

"I mean that my people come from many different countries. I'm not too sure from where, but maybe from England, Germany, Scotland, Spain, France, Sicily..." I said this, carefully omitting the

small portion of Sicilian Jews in my ancestry.

When she laughed, a songlike laughter floated-up, from her lovely mouth, not forced or overly loud, but a welcome gentle feminine laugh, not born of ego or insecurity, but from the heart. Right from the jump, I wanted to take Rosa back to my hotel. She clearly possessed sex appeal. On the weed and alone in another country, the touch of her hand was a comforting companion. No doubt she sensed my attraction to her. Walking toward the Chinese eatery, she lovingly slipped her left arm around my waist, and she grabbed my hand and put my right arm around her shoulders. Spontaneously, I kissed the left side of her head. Her hair smelled like soap and vanilla. Every aspect of her being made me want her. The run with Esteban, Pepe, and Manuel, together with that dreamy moment had made for a comfortable transition from the United States to Mexico. Mexico City was light years from my nightmare life in Mobile.

Long shadows stretched their way down the darkening street, and a slight cooling breeze caressed our bodies. We seemed to move fluidly as one, like old lovers, yet with the marked distinction of sexual anticipation. Plainly, it was an intoxicating situation,

a moment to remember. Some moments don't have to have great meaning to be beautiful and spell binding. They just have to feel good. To this day, that warm pleasant recollection makes my aged heart ache and renders me thankful for my largely worthless life. As we walked, I momentarily thought of Evangeline; she too had been so easy to get to know. My profound grief, because of her death had turned my heart into a hard-cased seed, which took a while to germinate back to life. My good wife, Margo, had been like the nourishing rain. But while Margo was indeed a great gal, she was not someone I was immediately attracted to, as I had been to Evangeline, as it also had been with Rosa. But although Margo and I lacked an immediate chemistry, Margo had certainly rescued me from the trauma of Evangeline's death, which had temporarily put me out of commission. I had never mentioned Evangeline's death, not even to my wife. I'd just lied, saying that her Dad had broken us up, and I was still heart broken over her. As unromantic as it may sound, between my two bouts of depression, the four years post alcohol withdrawal at age twelve, and the years right after the death of Evangeline, the former was by far the hardest, probably owing to my young age.

In a very real way, Rosa was my re-entry into the normal, non-matrimonial life. Margo had made me realize that marriage can be like a cage, too much of every day being like the last; not to mention, her sudden scary reversal about wanting kids. For me, most days of marriage were pleasant enough, but life is too short to be lived in such a redundant style. Rosa was giving me my freedom back, my normal life as a single male, and so I was free to return to being myself, not what people expected me to be. She was a beautiful creature of medium height, slim of build, a light skinned señorita, with a magnificent firm walk that spoke of wondrous things. While much of her was plainly Castilian, she also had slight Asian epicanthic folds, in the medial corners of her enormously large and widely spaced hypnotic brown eyes. Those were eyes which seemed to blaze and flash with their own expression.

Rosa had supple slightly muscular legs, a bit too long for her torso. Her straight black hair was pulled up in a thick bun, exposing her gracefully curving neck, lightly decorated with the thinnest line of interesting fine wispy baby hair running down the posterior midline of her delicate neck. Her light skin was unflawed, without scars or blemishes, which

made me wonder about its sensitivity, and of course that wispy thin ridge of fine hair on the back of her neck, also held potential. The other girls, which hung-out at Esteban's, were generally attractive, with warm temperaments, but in general, they didn't interest me, as did Rosa. There's something to be said for chemistry.

Rosa possessed the most alluring full mouth with thick sensuous lips... naturally dark, almost like dark grapes, but made of a firmer flesh than most women's lips. The larger upper lip had a remarkably elevated and firm rounded edge. They were spellbinding lips, which forced me to study them. They were lips you thought about sucking. Their darker hue was mesmerizing. Her smiling mouth was framed by that flawless light skin, and they were bracketed by deep dimples, whenever she smiled or pretended to pout. At times, when she'd looked at me, widen her large dark liquid eyes, then she would press-out those incredible shapely lips, allowing a smiling pout to slowly form in their corners, elevating her chiseled cheeks, and then she'd narrow her eyes into a happy broad smile. Afterwards, she'd gently laugh, because she enjoyed the bewitching effect her beauty had over me, and so did I.

Being stoned, I'm sure I stared at her, like a starving man sitting down to a feast. Beauty is something which is nearly impossible to get too much of, especially new beauty. For me, a woman's allure includes her eyes, her shape, her taste, her touch, her reaction to touch, the warmth of her genitals, etc. Certainly every man has his own opinion as to how appealing a particular woman is, but regardless of how beautiful the wife or girlfriend, most males especially enjoy unaccustomed beauty. A lesser percentage of females have that same inclination. Strolling down the cool dark street with Rosa, it was the first time in months, I felt so relaxed and content, as if I belonged where I was.

The brightly lit Chinese eatery was run by a hyperactive waif of an Asian woman, who momentarily glanced-up and waved at Rosa, while she continued accepting orders. The place was something of a multicultural shocker. Unlike American record stores, the aforementioned black 45 rpm discs came from all around the world: Asian, Mexico, England, America, Germany, Italy, South America, Africa, Jamaica, etc. At that moment, the place vibrated with the sounds of Grace Slick and *The Jefferson Airplane*, telling me to feed my head, when

what I really wanted was to feed my stomach. The Western rock-n-roll was making me glad I was away from the Mexican music at Esteban's apartment, which had started to give me a headache.

To varying degrees, I suppose that all of our musical temporal lobes, usually the right one, are slaves to our upbringing, to our peers, to our early acoustical experiences, as well as to our inherited DNA-established neural wiring. Maybe that's why Chinese music is pentatonic, and Arabic music contains microtones, which are notes situated between the notes in the Western chromatic musical scale. It's my humble contention, the genetic structuring of the cortical regions has a lot more to do with DNA differences, than simply the appreciation of certain types of music. Our neurophysiology is all a tangled hodgepodge of experience and genes.

So, if you're raising a child, please consider playing every type of music, for him or her, and not just the music, which you happen to enjoy. Select the child's music from all over the planet. Circle the globe, and make your child's musical right temporal lobe and melodious inferior frontal cortices a citizen of earth, rather than just the top ten songs on your

favorite radio station, or your top few hundred recorded tunes on you computer, iPod, or cellphone. Understanding the music of various cultures may have a positive effect on world peace. How many of our elementary, middle, and high schools play the various forms of music, from all over the planet? None? Why not? As long as other cultures remain strange, they remain easier to take advantage of, easier to kill.

While music can break down racial and cultural barriers, it generally can only be enjoyed if you have experienced it early in life. And while you're at it, consider buying your child *Rosetta Stone* for learning several languages, while concurrently, playing some cartoons, kid shows, and movies, which are in various languages, while they're learning to talk your language. It bares repeating, that perhaps by being able to better appreciate the languages and music of the world, it's a bit more difficult to start wars, and kill lots of people, for greed. The less understood the foreign culture, the easier it is to attack and destroy.

<http://jn.physiology.org/content/108/12/3289>

Someone once told me that the royal families of Europe would customarily staff their palaces, with non-native speaking servants. Each foreign domestic spoke a different language, and that way the royal children grew-up, speaking the various languages; simply by communicating with the workers. Perhaps the maid spoke French, the gardener might have spoken Chinese, the butler could have spoken German, the cook may have spoken Russian, the librarian Spanish, etc. Rarely does a parent take full advantage of their child's early formative years, ergo most cognitive potential goes untapped. In my limited assessment, there seems to be three primary factors contributing to America's fall in the education.

The first might be the welfare system, which encourages people to be lazy, not to work, and not to succeed. Such welfare parents oft pass this perspective on to their kids. They are the type of parents, who are prone to never blame themselves for their child's failures, but rather they look to blame the school system. In their mind, the school is but a potential defendant in a lucrative, but thoroughly frivolous lawsuit. Such moronic people often look at an unfounded, but successful lawsuit or

settlement, as an actual personal accomplishment, as if they themselves had done something great. The second reason for America's fall in education is the low quality of instruction. We've got too many nice, but slow witted teachers. This is true at all levels of education from preK to the doctorate. This brings me to the third reason, and that is that the government puts so much into defense that there's just not enough funding left for education, not enough money to hire quality teachers. Too many universities have become corporations, rather than institutions of higher learning. Just look at the tripe that America now ingests for news and art, and there are so many other examples, that America has become the bastion of the unread, especially in my home town of Mobile, Alabama.

Most of the child's important neural connections are made before age two. Moreover, don't forget that the fetus's eight cranial nerve can transmit music, and other sounds, into the developing fetal brain, but don't make the music too loud, or too bizarre. Nothing slows a child's development quite like stress. And only play the music, when it is obvious the fetus is active. The fetus may be active, when it's dreaming in the womb, and it's in a learning phase; as long as

the music isn't louder than the normal ambient background sounds of the environment, it won't awaken the unborn, and the sounds will be inoculated within its dreams, and the development of its musical right temporal lobe. Furthermore, make sure all conversations are polite and peaceful, with tones of love. Another thing which might aid in world peace is to teach the kids about all of the world's religions, not just yours, even though you 'know,' that yours is the only true one. Frequently, it's harder to hate someone, if you understand them. If their ideas and memories match-up, at least with some of yours, they become less strange, less menacing... harder to hate.

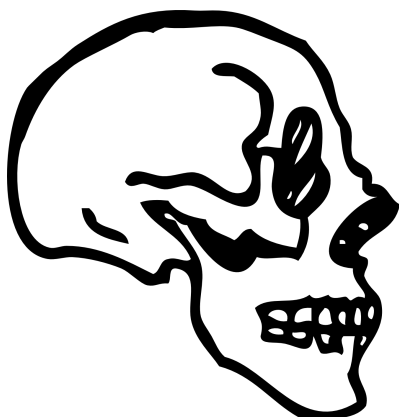
The slower Mexican songs, and the love songs, were great, but there was no way I could handle the faster paced mariachi music. At the ripe old age of twenty-five, it was too late for me to adjust to the mariachi music. The horn sounds were too blaring for my limited taste. Mexican music is just one of the minor reasons your average gringo needs to avoid ending-up in a dangerous Mexican prison, where such music is played almost non-stop, and in some prisons, the music persists late into the night. The best things you can have in a Mexican prison is

plenty of muscle, thick skin, and something sharp.

It wasn't going to be too long, before I'd undergo various events, which very nearly landed me in such an unsavory institution. The first one was only a few minutes from happening. To this day, another of those circumstances is largely foggy, and that's probably for the best. In some Mexican prisons, because of the level of violence, the entire staff have been known to vacate their posts, just walk away, leaving the lockup completely unguarded. The prisoners just walked back into the Mexican communities, and in other cases, the Mexican army was called-in. These days, because the drug cartels running the country, murders are all too common in Mexican prisons, and they're not just killing other prisoners. Too many of the murderous inmates have lethal friends and relatives on the outside, so the guards and their families remain vulnerable; as well, in poor Mexico, the guards are obviously more susceptible to bribes. Back then, as now, at certain Mexican prisons, the majority of the prisoners didn't make it out alive, regardless of the length of their sentences. This situation makes one wonder, who's more crooked, the cartel gangsters, or the Mexican government, or if there's any significant difference,

between them. Perhaps, only the American public fails to realize this inescapable truth. Currently, America seems to be falling prey to a similar condition, but instead of just cocaine lords running our government, we're also being destroyed by mega corporations: big Pharma, big oil, power companies, the military industries, the banks, the insurance companies, expensive low quality healthcare, while the American prison corporations are on the up swing.

[OBJ]



THE KILLING OF KNIFEMAN

As Rosa and I returned to Esteban's apartment, with a new pack of filterless *Camel* cigarettes for the gang, I tired being gallant, by jumping up the few stairs, onto the small patio, and grabbing the flimsy screen door handle to open it for Rosa. As I began to gently tug on the metal door handle, I was thinking about suggesting that we leave Esteban's apartment to go to my place, when suddenly, the screen door cracked and exploded outward, but not because of my pulling. Two struggling male bodies unexpectedly

came blasting-out backwards through the frail screen door, with one person in the deadly grip of the other.

As I turned toward the door to see what was happening, the broad muscular back of the larger man slammed directly into the front of me, and all three of us started falling over. Inadvertently, I was about to become an informal member of the *Las Piedras* street-gang. The wide back of a tall rangy stranger, who hadn't been at the party, when I left with Rosa, smashed solidly into my chest, and instantly, I was knocked over backwards, my back was slammed hard onto the concrete porch, pinning me flat by the combined weight of the two men. The stranger's back was pressed down on my chest, while it was Esteban's against the front of the stranger. In effect, I had their combined body weights on top of me.

On impact with the concrete, the ribs on my right side screamed-out in pain! As mentioned, the massive stranger was holding Esteban from behind, in something of bear-hug, using one arm and both legs. As I tried to comprehend what was happening, the huge fellow suddenly raised his right arm. It was then that I saw the knife poised in his grip, about to be plunged-down into Esteban's struggling body.

From what I could determine from my compromised position, Esteban was helplessly locked in the grip of the Knifeman's left arm and two legs. Knifeman was about to stab Esteban in his chest or abdomen. My mind transitioned from confusion, to understanding, along with the corresponding fear!

Though the knife is a simple and unsophisticated weapon, of unknown ancient origin, in the strong hands of a capable and willing fighter, it yet remains the second best close-combat weapon, and for stealth it beats the gun, especially those ceramic knives, which can go through the metal detectors. That same day, the old man at the museum had coincidentally mentioned that the Oldowan is the archaeological term used to refer to the earliest stone tool industry in prehistory, being used during the Lower Paleolithic period, spanning from 1.7 to 2.6 million years ago. Many of these primordial tools were first discovered at Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania; hence, the name Oldowan. A fair percentage of the Oldowan tools were knife-like, and constructed by hominids, or prehuman apes. If that is true, the knife is as old as humankind, if not older. Even modern day apes use a few crude tools. While many of those ancient human cutting tools were made of stone, quartz,

flint, etc., many were also those made from bone, but most of the bone weapons haven't withstood the destructive effects of time, ergo fewer ancient bone knives and axes have been archeologically discovered.

Next time you get a chance, just consider how easy it is to make a stabbing weapon from the sharpened leg bone of an animal, or to make an ax or hide scraping tool from a sharpened shoulder blade. It's likely that's why it's called the 'shoulder blade,' or 'the blade bone.' Early man probably sharpened the vertebral edge of the shoulder blade on a stone, then affixed a stick to the bone's acromion process and glenoid fossa, and thus one of the early types of battle-axes (below) was born.

OBJ



As mentioned, I didn't recognize the man with the knife. He must have arrived, while I was gone with Rosa, buying the cigarettes. It was clear, he was a stranger, because he wore a brightly colored red and yellow button-up shirt, and no one had on such a tawdry shirt, prior to our departure to the Chinese carryout. The stranger was considerably larger than Esteban, whom he was attempting to kill.

Esteban was violently struggling to free himself, trapped by the big man's left arm and two legs, as the knife drove downward. It reminded me of my old wrestling days in military schools, where a wrestler was doing his best to avoid being pinned. At that moment, I reached-up and tried to grab the stranger's wrist, but I failed to make a good grab, so the knife still drove savagely downward; nevertheless, because of my fumbling efforts on Knifeman's hairy forearm, I did manage to at least clumsily to redirect the weapon's path. Concurrently, Esteban was forcefully rolling to his right. Instead of the knife plunging into Esteban, its point sunk into my exposed bent left knee, which had been extending up and over the left side of Knifeman's ribcage. The pain caused me to briefly shoutout.

The point of the blade entered just a half an inch

to the right of my kneecap, and the pain was quickly acute, but it would soon transform into a paralyzing deep ache, which seemed to affect my entire left leg from ankle to groin, and so I forgot about my hurtful ribs. It felt like my left leg was useless. Because of the weight of the two men on top of me, I was unable lean forward to inspect my injury, and so wrongly assumed that the knife had gone clean deep into my leg, as it had when Pig had been stabbed, my previously mentioned young paperboy. It was probably at that moment, the adrenaline began to flow, ergo time became less hurried. The knife wielding man seemed to slow in his movements.

When the knife was firmly imbedded in the bone, the hand that had held the knife, for some reason lost its grip; most likely, because Esteban had simultaneously thrown a well-placed elbow to somewhere in the guy's midsection. Knifeman apparently lost track of his knife, which remained buried in my knee. Esteban's elbow had stunned him, but only for a second. The powerful man still had a partial, but less effective, hold on Esteban, who was in the process of thrashing about, freeing himself. While my entire left leg ached, and felt leadened, the adrenaline flowed. A white hot lump of blinding rage

took control. I tasted the bitter all-consuming desire to kill the big Mexican. The feeling was swift, and welcome. This was far different from the wanting to kill an animal, when hunting; but was far more demanding, more visceral.

Once I'd lost my grip on the Knifeman's arm, and the knife had lodged in my knee, simultaneous with my yelp of pain, I reflectively slipped my right arm under the maniac's chin, around his throat, and my right hand firmly grabbed my left bicep, as the palm of my left hand cupped the back of his head. His throat was trapped inside the crook of my right elbow. At that instant, I shoved my left palm forward, with all my strength, crushing his Adam's apple in the bend of my right arm. For some reason, at that dire instant, I thought about how greasy his long black hair felt, in my left palm, and how much I wanted to kill him.

His head had been conveniently positioned so that applying the choke-hold required practically no effort. With a few pounds of pressure applied to the throat and the back of the head for a five or six-second count, a man can easily be knocked-out cold. But needless to say, I was applying as much pressure as I possibly could muster, literally trying to not just

knock him out, but to break his neck, and to permanently crush his windpipe. That wrestling move is a devastating, for it not only closes-off the windpipe, but it shuts-down the two carotid arteries, which supply blood to the brain, as well as occluding the two jugular veins, which allow deoxygenated blood to leave the brain. When those four vessels are closed down, no blood flows through the brain, and then it's time for the brain to turn-off; but if you hold it a bit longer, the victim never awakens.

At my old military school, all the young guys on the wrestling team had religiously practiced the 'rear naked choke,' over and over, whenever the coach wasn't watching. We practiced the deadly move to the point, that executing the hold became hard-wired, an instinctual reflex, a move than required no thought. During afternoon wrestling practice, even thinking about the particular rather simple move would initiate the series of the requisite motor movements. The reason why we high school wrestlers had practiced the maneuver, so often, was that it was deadly, and that is why it was illegal to use in a wrestling match. Once applied, it was thought to be nearly impossible to break. Learning the lethal choke hold was a male adolescent's

coming-of-age thing. In effect, the rear naked choke was tantalizing forbidden fruit, a formidable taboo.

Remarkably simple to apply, the powerful hold possessed the dire ability to kill, or produce permanent brain damage, if applied too long. As high school wrestlers, several things motivated us to wrestle: the local girls watching in the audience, winning the match, and the knowledge that what we were learning on the mat what might one day be useful in a real fight, perhaps even a fight to the death. For me, the latter motivator had arrived, there on Esteban's dismal little concrete portico in Mexico City. The memory of that high school wrestling hold had instinctively returned, but with a determined vengeance.

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In military school, my roommate and I had both been wrestlers, and often practiced the lethal uncomplicated move. When one of us was distracted doing something, the other would suddenly jump on

his back and apply the hold. If properly applied, the victim, would feel himself beginning to pass-out, and he had but to tap the attacker's forearm to be released. This high school rehearsal of the rear naked choke was nothing short of ritualistic. Everyone on the wrestling team mastered the move and trusted each other to release when tapped. With few exceptions, it has been nearly impossible to find such trust in the adults. Still, I found it years later, among certain of my fellow skydivers, when we'd check each others gear/parachute rigs, right before we'd jumped out of the plane. These last minute checks were called, 'pin-checks.' It would have been a simple thing to sabotage someone's parachute, during a pin-check.

Modern day mixed martial arts athletes and cage fighters now frequently use that same choke. Whenever it's applied during a fight, the victim often taps-out, or the referee stops the fight, demanding or forcing the winner to release the hold, rescuing the unconscious loser. The only way to escape that hold is to grasp and remove the hand, which is applied to the back of your head, but that's next to impossible to do. Besides, if the person is not so trained, they usually try to remove the arm which is around their

throat, and that can't be done. As simple as the hold is, it is likely invented ten of thousands of years ago by some caveman, desperately fighting for his life. In the heat of mortal combat, he just happened to stumble upon the rear naked choke. Realizing how effective it was, he may have then taught it to his son and male friends, and so forth and so on.

That evening in Mexico City, the perfect situation for the application of the rear naked choke had at long last painfully arrived. While choking out Knifeman, I moved my injured leg to the left, while trying to keep his head tilted back, by arching my back and pressing my abdomen and chest into his back, and slightly tilting him to the right, hoping that he wouldn't be able to spot the knife, still stuck in my left leg. I was deathly afraid he'd relocated the knife and might attempt to pull out the blade, and then commence to stabbing me, again. Looking back, I think he'd thought the knife had fallen somewhere to the ground. I was so afraid of him, that I grimly thought about continuing the hold, and killing him. Besides, if I didn't kill him, he could have always come back at me in the future, for there was a real possibility he'd learn that it was I, who'd choked him out. The choice was to kill or not to kill, and I wasn't

easing up.

A large part my rage definitely wanted Knifeman dead, since the knife in my leg was beyond intolerable. I was deathly afraid of him, and had no wish to face him, again. Indisputably, he was a cold blooded killer, and perhaps even enjoyed murdering. *Let's get it over with, and kill this asshole, so I never have to worry about him, again!* As the killer's body started to go limp, I instantly recalled Dad's sage advice about not feeling remorse about killing someone, who desperately needed killing, and so I felt none, at least not then, and kept pressing the attack.

Dad had also mentioned something about initially trying to reason with the person, but that was out of the question in the situation with the Knifeman. The big man now had both his weakening hands, grasping at my right forearm, trying to remove the impossible choke hold from his throat, and of that I was glad, since his left hand could have searched for, and maybe found, the knife stuck in my knee.

Knifeman had to have been shocked, when first I wrapped my arm around his throat and began chocking him out. There was no way he could have

anticipated that he was going to fall right on top of me, who had suddenly leaped up on the porch, and was opening the screen door for Rosa. While choking-out Knifeman, in addition to arching my back, and twisting his head to the right, I'd twice wiggled my arms to give him the false hope, that he might be able dislodge my rear naked choke, urging him to keep his hands, clawing at and pulling on, my right arm. Luckily, I've been gifted with a fair share of strength, and the big guy's fumbling efforts to free himself from the chock-hold were futile. He only managed to scratch my skin, and further deplete the oxygen supply to his murderous brain. *Die, asshole!*

Thankfully, the killer remained unaware that his knife was stuck in my knee, which could have easily been his for the taking, had he realized it was there. Had he gone grabbing for the knife, my plan was to push his jaw to the right, thereby forcefully rotating his head to the right, causing him to resist me by trying to rotate his head to the left. Once I felt him do that, then I too would suddenly and violently rotate his head to the left, using his strength to help me brake his neck. Conceivably, he may have thought the knife was stuck in Esteban. Esteban had gotten loose and was quickly on his feet, just as

Knifeman blacked-out. Once Esteban was up, I hooked my right leg around Knifeman's right side and pounded my right heel into his groin, but since he was unconsciousness, Knifeman barely responded to the painful insult. Nevertheless, I didn't release the hold, this begged the question, 'should I kill him?'

Right then, Esteban's guys, the members of *Las Piedras*, came piling out the door, and began beating-on, and kicking the crap out of, Knifeman, while I was still choking him. Perhaps their apparent delay, in responding, may have been due to the weed they'd been smoking. Still, I held the deadly choke, for an additional five count, not enough to kill him, but I wanted to make sure that Esteban's men had time to take full control of him, if he came to; they didn't care about taking a prisoner. For a second or two, I didn't realize that Esteban's men had begun stabbing Knifeman; I mistakenly assumed that they were only kicking and hitting him. My first clue that they were actually killing him, was when I felt the wetness of Knifeman's warm blood, running onto my arm. *It's so warm and watery.* One of Esteban's guys had stabbed Knifeman in the face. After a few seconds, a half dozen of the gang, started pulling Knifeman off me, dragging him violently down the concrete steps of

the portico, onto the sidewalk, then around to the small driveway, which lead back to an alleyway, behind Esteban's apartment. Knifeman briefly came to, as I watched the gang dragging him toward the end of the building.

As the villain was being dragged up the driveway, Manuel plunged a thin knife blade into Knifeman's left eye, to the hilt, and so undoubtedly it had entered Knifeman's brain, yet surprisingly, he still didn't die right away, letting out a modest wail of sorts. He'd probably been stabbed roughly a dozen times. *It's not like in the movies, where one stab kills someone.* Some blood sprayed from a throat wound. The last thing I noticed was that Knifeman had on a new pair of low profile running shoes.

Moments ago, walking down the narrow darkening street with Rosa had seemed relaxed and romantic, but then with Knifeman's sudden appearance, the place had been transformed into a horror story. Esteban's men briefly shouted a few muffled oaths from the back alleyway. *He's dead!*

As mentioned, at some point in the terminal melee, right before I arrived, Esteban had been cut. He was standing on the porch, leaning against a short black wrought iron railing, holding his bleeding

forearm. The blood flow was impressive, forming a scattering of large drops on the concrete. Sometime after Knifeman was pulled off the porch, Rosa came-up onto the stoop. She just stood there, with her back pressed against the aged building's brick facing, not making a sound. Esteban's dark eyes moved in his pained face, like synchronized little dark animals, carefully surveying the injury to his forearm. Still, he appeared to be without fear, matter-of-factly, inspecting his wound.

Prior to that night, I'd seen three other stabbings, but only one of the others had resulted in death. Also, in the near future there would be one particular night, which involved numerous stabbings, but a portion of that night somehow got erased from my conscious memory. The one stabbing, which I remember and resulted in death, occurred late one evening in early April of 1968; I was driving home from a night of drinking in Georgetown, the party town of Washington DC, where I'd first meant the lovely Evangeline.

Bob Dylan was on the radio singing, *Mr. Tambourine Man*, telling him to sing a song for him. Peaceful Dr. Martin Luther King had been shot and killed, and this tragedy was followed by a few days

of black people rioting in Washington DC. I hadn't watched television or listened to any news on the radio, during the previous few days, being too interested in partying and drinking, and so while listening to Bob Dylan, I was completely unaware that the kindly Dr. King had been assassinated.

...Then take me disappearin' through the smoke
rings of my mind

Down the foggy ruins of time, far past the
frozen leaves

The haunted, frightened trees, out to the
windy beach

Far from the twisted reach of crazy
sorrow

Yes, to dance beneath the diamond sky with one
hand waving free

Silhouetted by the sea, circled by the
circus sands

With all memory and fate driven deep beneath
the waves

Let me forget about today until
tomorrow...

Excerpt from the song, *Mr.
Tambourine Man*, by Bob Dylan

It was late when I left Georgetown, and was driving home. The radio announcer suddenly cut in, interrupting one of my favorite songs.

“Sorry to cut in on Bob’s song, but something crazy is going on downtown on 14th and T, right here in our nation’s capital, and it’s happening this very second. I’m not too sure what it is, but I’ll keep you posted, as I get more news. Whatever it is, it’s a major deal! Lots of people are going looney-tunes in that part of the nation’s capital. Now let’s play something that’ll get your juices flowing... Gracie Slick and the...”

Listening to that broadcast, I was driving in a little white 1967 VW bug, possibly the best early model of bug ever made, and I was about to turn right off of K Street, onto 14th avenue, to take the 14th street bridge out of the district, into Arlington, then home to Alexandria, Virginia, but with the radio announcer's comment, I instead turned left onto 14th and headed north, toward T Street, about nine blocks

away, just to see what the radio announcer was talking about. When I got there, still not having heard anything more on the radio about the exact nature of what was going down, I didn't realize what I was driving into. Arriving at the location, all hell seemed to have broken loose. That street literally looked like a war zone. *What the hell is happening, here?* Black people were breaking into, and looting, and burning the stores, as well as destroying almost every car on the street.

Most of the stores had their front windows broken-in, and/or their front doors smashed-in. The people were seriously pissed, and from the look of things, feeling extremely destructive. A few buildings and lots of parked cars had been set ablaze, but understandably no fire trucks or police cars had come into the black riot, nor would they be coming, anytime too soon. Not even any news crews were headed there. At this point, I knew nothing about Dr. King's death. *What's going on, here?* After the fires had long burned-out, and the national guard had arrived, only then would the firetrucks and the police begin to venture in.

That night on the blocks surrounding 14th and T, the winds were causing the black and white smoke to

whip and dance around the streets, producing something of a surreal scene. The acrid smoke choked me. *This is like a movie.* A rear tire on a destroyed light green *Cadillac* was burning brightly like an orange torch, pouring forth thick clouds of pungent black smoke. From where I was stopped on 14th street, I could see at least a dozen cars, and ten or so businesses, in flames. *God, that burning car tire really stinks!* Black people, mostly young to middle aged men, but a few black women as well, were running into and out of the stores, milling around the streets, shouting, and looking angry. Some were running away, clutching their prize plunder, others just stood there and watched all the hubbub. A good sized liquor store was getting lots of attention. One woman was holding a vacuum cleaner with her left arm and trying to carry a heavy cardboard case of liquor under her right. Because of the weight of the liquor, she had to repeatedly elevate her right thigh to push-up the heavy case of booze. Her greed had surpassed her physical strength. Finally, she carefully lowered the case of liquor to the ground. She opened the case, put a fifth in the vacuum cleaners bag and zipped it closed, then walked away carrying the vacuum cleaner, and a fifth under each arm and a fourth bottle in her free hand. I was abruptly

distracted by some movement across the street.

As mentioned, unbeknownst to me, the black people's leader, a pacifist, had been brutally murdered, by what people then thought was, a white racist assassin, and they desperately wanted justice, or at least, some kind of payback. All the way to the grave, James Earl Ray, the alleged assassin, would deny doing the killing, and I largely believe him, simply because there was no point to continuing a lie all the way to his deathbed. My humble opinion is that Dr. King's made a fatal error by speaking out against the holy of holys, the Vietnam war... the big paycheck for the military industries. Dr. King had begun to speak out against the morality of the war, claiming it was an unjust war. What if all the blacks refused to fight in the war? The end of that war, would spell the end to huge profits made by the three hundred odd companies, comprising the almighty military industrial complex (MIC).

If that seems like too much a stretch of logic, just ask yourself the following question. Does it seem to be too far a reach to assume that people, who make their living by manufacturing equipment to kill people, or to indirectly support the killing of people, might be willing to actually kill a few innocent

people, just to keep their bloody war profits flowing? And while thinking about your answer, ask yourself why we were in that Vietnam war to begin with. What purpose did it serve, with its three million dead Vietnamese, and fifty-four thousand dead Americans? If there were that many killed, just imagine how many were permanently injured: blinded, crippled, brain damaged, psychiatrically disturbed, disfigured, suffering with cancer due to agent orange, etc.

As mentioned, some sound from across the street, made me look away from the open partial case of booze. Swiveling my head and glancing out of my driver's window, I noted the bright glare of neon-lites at an all-night gas station. In the harsh lights, I witnessed a large angry black man pulling open the driver's door of a fairly new light yellow *Plymouth Fury*, with a black vinyl top. The black man forcefully yanked out the driver, a small bewildered looking white man. The middle aged, out-of-shape, white guy looked like a nondescript clerk or accountant, wearing a wrinkled dark gray suit, with a loose red knit tie. He'd probably just gotten off of some thankless bureaucratic job.

“Hey! What are you doing?” The little white guy protested.

Some men scream or whine, when they need to be fighting. The powerful black guy held the white man from behind, with his thick left muscular arm wrapped around the smaller man's neck, so the white man was being pulled-up on his tiptoes. That's when the black gentleman repeatedly plunged a big wooden-handled kitchen knife into the business man's abdomen and chest. I hadn't noticed the knife, until then. *Why does he have a kitchen knife?* With the first two stabs, the white man didn't seem to realize that he was being stabbed. He only yelled once, and it wasn't much of a yell. The last word of his life was, "No!" Then he seemed to lose all muscle tone, appearing to die with the third thrust of the blade. With the last stab, the knife got stuck, probably hung-up in some coastal cartilage, and so it was difficult for the black man to extract it, so the big black man just let out a big breath, released his hold, and the white body crumpled to the ground with the knife still stuck-in its' chest. *The rough wooden handle probably won't have any usable fingerprints.* Because of my maternal Grandpa's lectures and my own criminal tendencies, I tended to always consider evidence. No one had seemed to pay the murder any mind. People were busy looting stores, breaking in cars, setting fires, etc.

The black man then looked about and casually strolled away, as if nothing significant had just happened. It was highly doubtful that the big man knew the little white man, he had just killed. He didn't even attempt to rummage through the victim's pockets to rob him. *What's going on?* Besides myself, the dead man appeared to be the only white guy in the area. The big black man was just blowing off some steam, and needed an outlet, but he'd obviously killed the wrong target. The real target, the killer of Dr. King, still remains invisible, and it probably wasn't Mr. Ray. The real target may have worked for some government agency, a few miles to the east of Dulles Airport.

Right before he died, the unfortunate white guy, no doubt wished he'd stopped at another gas station. Strangely, the stabbing seemed more violent, than personal. It seemed more horrific than the machine gunning of the two teens. Maybe that misconception is because bullets are more detached; maybe it's because they're invisible as they travel through the air, ergo the connection between the killer and the victim appears less real. There was something more visceral about the knife attack on the helpless little white man, as was the case with Knifeman, having

the knife thrust into his eye, that evening outside Esteban's apartment.

The night after King was slaughtered, 14th street was almost solidly blocked by hordes of angry black people, and by the many abandoned cars, several roiling in flames. The black people were angry because a truly fine black man had been needlessly murdered. I'm sure, Dr. King wasn't perfect, but then who is? Maybe he did have the occasional mistress, as Hoover alleged. But, so what? He'd worked hard to persuade millions of people to take a peaceful path of righteousness, in response to marked oppression. In that respect, the white people of America never had a better friend. No one else could have done what he had. No one... He'd probably still be alive, if he'd stuck to civil rights, and hadn't started preaching about that war in Vietnam.

None of the burning cars blew-up, they just burned fiercely. *All the racing I did, and all wrecks I've had and never did a car catch on fire.* Smoke was forming mini tornadoes, swirling around the many vexed people. Finally realizing I was in danger, I hurriedly tried to pull a sharp u-turn, to leave the way I'd come. But because of the people and cars, I had to go up onto the wide city sidewalk on the West

side of 14th Street, close to where the dead white man laid, who was staring at the depressing neon lights above the gas pumps. Heading south, down the sidewalk to escape the area, a group of black men purposely jumped-out in front of my car, blocking my ability to get back on 14th, and exit from the area. *Oh, Shit!*

Perhaps, I could have tried to run them down, and plowed straight through them, but there were others, coming in right behind them, and it was only the three men in the front of the group, who were actually challenging me, but the others hadn't yet noticed me. Besides, my VW beetle was light weight. *If they'd just get out of my way, I could get back on 14th, and the fuck out of here.* Under the driver's seat, I had stowed a well-worn cheap 9 mm *Llama* semiautomatic pistol, built similar to the old 1911 Colt .45. The gun was dependable, and easy to take apart and clean, though the mechanism was extremely loose, so it was fairly inaccurate, but it was good for anything under forty feet. Pulling out the pistol, I thumbed-back the hammer, since I always had kept one round in the chamber, and the safety off. After all, the *Boy Scouts* motto was, 'Be Prepared!'

At first, I thought about firing a warning shot, but figured that would be a waste of a bullet, which I might need, and so I decided that the first shot would be put into the central mass of the biggest of the three men. He was a fierce reddish brown fellow, about six foot three, plainly radiating hatred toward me, but incongruently he wore a t-shirt with a peace symbol. *The shirt is too small for him.* He had shouted to his two friends and pointed at me with what appeared to be a full Clorox bottle in his other hand. *Why is he holding a bottle of bleach?* Gripping the pistol in my left hand, I hurriedly jammed the gun out the open car window, aimed at the peace symbol, and yelled.

“Move it, asshole or I’m gonna kill you!” *I’ll give him two seconds.*

Thank God it was April and spring had arrived, so it was a fairly warm night. As a consequence, my driver’s window was already rolled down. By no means, am I ambidextrous, yet I can shoot a pistol and punch equally well with both hands, probably because I spent years playing the church organ with both hands, as a child. Practicing the musical scales, and redundantly playing boring pieces of church music, was my Mom’s idea on how to wreak my

childhood. There's a good chance that it was Mom's way of paying me back for the grass snake. Normal male children are not made to go to school for eight hours five days a week, then practice music for another two hours. Such behavior is contrary to what the prepubescent male is designed for.

Pointing the large black semiautomatic pistol at the largest man in the group, all three of them instantly spotted the *Llama*. The big man wasted not a second as he leaped to his left, while yelling.

“He's got a gun!”

Suddenly, the group no longer looked so angry, only surprised, and as if by magic, the seas of dark bodies parted, so I hit the gas and let out the clutch, while revving the engine. Thanks to my having that gun under the carseat, I'm alive today, and I didn't have to fire a shot. As a result, I'm opposed to most gun control, except for maybe assault rifles and banana clips, and we need background checks, especially psychiatric. Then again, I also seriously fear our government getting too much control.

Hurriedly, I got back onto 14th street, then headed south for home sweet home. *Wonder if the white guy in the gas station had a gun, if he'd still be*

alive? There were very few security cameras in those days, so most likely the black man, who'd stabbed the little business man, was never arrested. On the way home that night, while the radio station continued to make mention of the riot on 14th street, I didn't hear anything about the murdered white man. I've often wondered how long his body laid by his car, before the National Guard came in. To the best of my knowledge, the death of the white business man never appeared in the *Washington Post*, nor on television. That may have been a wise decision to keep down more killings, for once some people realize that killing gains them notoriety, things might have escalated. After all, the one man, who'd taught them, peaceful resistance, had been violently murdered, and quite possibly to save the profits of the military industrial complex.

Assassinating Dr. King may have allowed Vietnam to continue on for seven more years, and again, that pointless war was a colossal moneymaker. Vietnam had lasted twenty years, and the colossal WWII had lasted only four. Sad to say, most Americans supported the unnecessary war, because most people are fairly honest, and are average or below average on the IQ scale, and so they believe the media.

The world had suddenly changed! The death of Dr. King did many things, which have been discussed countless times, by so very many people. One thing the death of Dr. King accomplished, was that most black people stopped looking at the Vietnam war as an unjust war. They went back to talking about civil rights. The murder of Dr. King had accomplished what it was intended to do. It was like most Americans, black and white, didn't remotely suspect that the US government had killed Dr. King. In their minds, it was that 'evil' redneck, James Earl Ray.

For several years, ninety-nine percent of America believed that good ole James Earl Ray had pulled the trigger, principally because he was a known bigot. With King's death, blacks just stopped talking about the 'unjust' war, and it continued on and the military industrial complex kept making tons of weapons, and millions of tons of other military supplies, garnering huge amounts of cash. That southeast Asian war only cost 54,000 dead American GIs, and 3,000,000 dead Vietnamese, but the war industry literally made trillions of dollars off those deaths.

Another social change Dr. King's death may have created, which hasn't received significant discussion, is that it gave birth to a marked increase in overt

black against white racism, and it's been escalating, ever since. After all whitey killed a very good black leader, who'd told them to remain passive. When you kill the peacemaker, you're plainly pleading for trouble. Albeit, said reverse discrimination still doesn't compare to that which blacks have sustained from white bigots. The Southern Poverty Law Center recently stated, "The number of hate groups in the United States rose for a second year in a row in 2016 as the radical right was energized by the candidacy of Donald Trump." The number of explicitly anti-Muslim groups has nearly tripled, between 2015 to 2016. One has to wonder what will happen, if Trump gets elected.

Where racism had been largely a white disease, since King's assassination, many blacks have begun to discriminate, against whites. If you're white and not a racist, racism may seem nonexistent, but just bare-in-mind the simple little facts that: whites enslaved thousands if not millions (world-wide) of innocent black people for many years, and after the civil war, many whites continued to discriminate against blacks. For example, blacks weren't allowed in many if not most white hospitals, stores, and restaurants. They weren't allowed to use white

restrooms or water fountains, and were paid less, etc. Judges still tend to be tougher on blacks, when it comes the length of prison sentences. Police are more apt to arrest blacks. The Voting Rights Act didn't come about until 1965! Albeit not James Earl Ray, most likely it was a white man, who assassinated Dr. King, and lastly, large numbers of black men are still unjustly beaten and killed by white police.

James Earl Ray may have been the perfect patsy: not too bright, a highly vocal board certified bigoted redneck, and small time criminal. There were plenty of such people to select from in the South. In the years following Ray's arrest, questions arose about Ray's involvement in Dr. King's murder. Ray claimed that he was not the only one involved in the killing. He asserted that a man, who he'd met in Canada, named Raoul, had planned the murder and actually shot Dr. King. Later, in the 1990s, Ray suggested a conspiracy, which involved the government, had been behind Dr. King's assassination. Indeed, a special congressional committee (1978) agreed that it was likely that Ray had not acted by himself. James Earl Ray escaped from prison in 1977, with the unexpected support of the King family! Not long before Ray's death, Dexter King, Dr. King's son,

visited the man presumed to be his father's killer. Ray, who was by then feeble and gravely ill from hepatitis C, was asked by Dexter King about his involvement in the assassination. "I had nothing to do with killing your father," Ray claimed. "I believe you," Dexter King responded, and shook his hand. Ray died in the Columbia Nashville Memorial Hospital in 1998.

I'd been carrying that *Llama* semiautomatic pistol, since I was sixteen, almost four years. For all those years, I had succeeded in keeping it a secret. In effect the gun had saved my life. I'd gotten the gun, after I'd been called to testify against an infamous motorcycle gang leader, known as, "Little Richard." Contrary to his name, Little Richard was an absolute giant of a man, with nearly every inch of his body being covered in tattoos. Just before the trial, I'd been sitting on a wooden bench in the courthouse hallway, just outside the courtroom. One of the larger jail guards brought the wild looking giant of a man, in chains, to the courtroom doors, next to where I was sitting. The guard barely stepped inside the courtroom, leaving one foot still outside, and one hand still holding Richards restraining chains. The guard was talking to the bailiff, so the giant was in

the hall, standing not less than two feet in front of me. The shackled Richard, leaned forward, and with his face only a couple of inches from my nose, he whispered.

“If you get up on that fucking stand and open your God damn mouth asshole, you’ll be dead! See, I may get locked-up, but my gang won’t be, and I promise you, they’ll hunt you down and kill you, motherfucker! Hear me?” *It’s time to buy a pistol.*

Despite that threat, one of my friends and I testified against the infamous gang leader, describing how he and some of his gang had stolen pieces of audio-visual equipment out of a local elementary school. My friend and I just happened to be out driving around that night and saw some of the gang carrying the equipment across the road and into the woods, to be picked-up later that night. Initially, not knowing what we’d actually seen, we’d gotten out of the car, walked into the woods, and there was the equipment stacked-up, then out, from behind a tree, stepped Little Richard and several of his biker gang. Putting two and two together, we ran and jumped into the still running car and zoomed away, and flagged down a passing cop car.

During Richard’s trial, the defense attorney asked

my friend how he was able to identify Little Richard in the darkness of the nighttime woods, and my friend said that there were lights on the side of the school, just across the street from those woods. Then the defense attorney produced a map showing the location of trees, claiming that the trees would have blocked the lights on the school. My friend handily replied, "There's not too many leaves on those trees in the winter time." After the guilty verdict had been brought in, I went out and bought the gun, for twenty bucks, at a pawn shop, and didn't have to show an ID.

Though I had carried the pistol for years, I never had to fire it to defend myself, but simply by sticking the weapon out the car window that crazy night on 14th street, I was able to live-on to write this fiction. The visual threat of the 9 mm did the trick, and so it was worth every penny. While about seventy percent of my views are left of center, I do believe in the right to bare arms, unless the person is convicted of a violent crime, or a crime where a weapon was used, or if the person is psychiatrically unbalanced.

With Knifeman's death, I recall thinking that we all die alone, whether in the company of friends and family, or being stabbed by an enemy. We all make

that journey unaided, if in fact there is an actual journey. At just a week shy of the age of ninety-two, my father took two weeks to die of pneumonia. Not once did he seem to mind dying. On the contrary, he remained calm and very matter-of-fact. Fear never appeared to cross his brow... never! It was like he was waiting for the waitress to bring him his bowl tomato soup. I was shocked at how fearlessly he passed away, for I am often afraid of just being afraid.

Perhaps because of Dad's combat experiences and having survived several surgeries, death was no stranger, but more like a stranger, always hovering nearby, waiting to shake hands. There's a saying that a brave man dies but once, and that was my good Dad. In this respect, I think I'm my Dad's polar opposite. How many times have I needlessly feared death, only to recall Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*?

Cowards die many times before their deaths. The brave experience death only once. Of all the strange things I've ever heard, it seems most strange to me that men fear death, given that death, which can't be avoided, will come whenever it wants.

Julius Caesar (Act 2, Scene 2) by William Shakespeare

I noticed that blood was freely flowing from the back of Esteban's forearm; the wound looked to be a half inch deep, and about eight or nine inches in length. He evidently received it by blocking the knife, before falling out the door, in the grip of Knifeman. Esteban took off his shirt and wrapped it tightly around his injured forearm, then looked-up, and thanked me. He instructed me to pull the knife out of my knee, and to leave quickly before the police arrived. Without another word, he rolled his shoulder, turned, and walked away up the sidewalk; I assumed he was headed to a clinic, and away from whatever was happening with Knifeman's body in the back alley.

Later, I would find-out the police never showed. Considering the racket that had been made by the struggle, I had been sure the police were on their way, but I guess no one had called the cops, or maybe the cops just didn't care. The police were a whole different specie in Mexico City, especially compared to those in the United States. The Mexican cops were better, in the sense that they tended not to beat or shoot people for racial reasons, but they could easily be bribed, probably not too dissimilar

from those cops in New Orleans, where I'd bought my drugs from Harold.

The dimly lit street allowed me to see my knee with the knife still protruding straight-out, at a near-perfect ninety degree angle. For me, it was an oddly shocking sight to behold. Unexpectedly, there was only a small amount of swelling, and not too much blood. Originally, I had figured the knife was buried deep to its' hilt in my leg. However, when I was able to look at it, I noticed the blade had barely penetrated one inch, but approximately half of that single inch was embedded in my bone. At first, I tried a little gentle tugging to extract the knife, but as I gently pulled, it hurt more than I cared to deal with. Pulling on the knife transformed the pain from a dull ache to an angry creature.

So without looking, I quickly slapped down on the knife's handle and the weapon popped-out, clattering to the sidewalk. With the knife out, the pain returned to being a serious ache, and suddenly the swelling increased. Now and then, I can still feel the pain, a small unpleasant recollection. Picking it up, I thumbed the knife edge and sensed that it was exceedingly sharp. *Knifeman probably sharpened this knife today, just so he could kill Esteban.* A couple of

drops of my blood were on the blade and only a teaspoon of blood had run down my shin. Some of the blood on the blade may have been Esteban's. I wiped the knife-edge on my well worn jeans, folded the blade into its handle, then shoved the weapon into my back pocket, where I then found the crushed pack of *Camels*, which I'd just purchased at the Chinese carry-out.

Thinking about the cops coming, I felt it was time to get clear of that area, so like Esteban, I didn't want to hang around. Nor did I want to see what was happening to Knifeman in the back alley. Rosa still stood on the porch. I stared at her for a couple of seconds, then tossed her the pack of cigarettes, she didn't move to catch them, so the pack just bounced off her belly and fell to the concrete. She stooped down to pick-up the pack.

"The guys may want those cigarettes. *Especially, after the minor stress of killing Knifeman.* So, please give them to the guys, Rosa. I've gotta go before the cops show-up. See you later." That was my parting comment, as I turned and walked away.

After I reached the Chinese carryout, I removed my bloody t-shirt, I used it to wipe-away Knifeman's blood off my arm. Having made sure that no one was

looking, I threw the shirt it in a rusty trash barrel, then ducked into the Chinese carryout, used their bathroom mirror to check myself for blood, rinsed-off some, purchased and pulled-on, a plain dark green t-shirt, then hurried-out in search of a cab. In my haste, I'd failed to rinse my own blood off my knee and shin. After a few blocks, I was able to flag a taxi. Giving the cabbie the name of my hotel, I leaned back on the backseat, but couldn't relax, because my mind just kept reviewing the events, and I wondered what would happen, when the police arrived. Sad to say, I was more worried about what the police might do to me, than I regretted the death of Knifeman. As my injured knee throbbed and ached, I started thinking about getting some medical help. The puncture wound made by the knife point wasn't that big, but I was concerned about infection, and that's when I recalled that you didn't need a prescription to purchase pharmaceuticals in Mexico.

"Is there a pharmacy near my hotel?" I inquired of the cabby.

"Yeah, there's one about three blocks, passed than your hotel. Are you sick?" He asked.

"A little...just a cold. Please drop me at the pharmacy." I responded.

The interior of the diminutive corner pharmacy was harshly lit by nine bare clear lightbulbs. The apothecary was only about twelve feet by twelve feet. The iodine, gauze, and adhesive tape were out on shelves. The gray haired clerk noticed the blood and stared hard at my leg. Hungry, tired, and in pain, I tried to smile, but instead just managed another lie, explaining that I had fallen on a broken bottle. He questioned me about whether the glass was still in the wound, and I told him that I was fairly sure I'd gotten it all out, but was going home to wash-out the wound.

Up on the counter, I placed a bottle of iodine, a package of gauze, a roll of adhesive tape, and a bar of sulfur soap, then pointed at a display case behind the counter, requesting two different types of antibiotics, and some number four codeine tablets. The antibiotics and the codeine tablets, were not in bottles, but instead, came packaged in small white cardboard boxes. The two types of antibiotics were good old fashioned penicillin, and what was then, a fairly new antibiotic, keflex. The codeine had been around since 1832, created by Pierre Jean Robiquet, and the penicillin had been isolated from mold in 1928. The antibiotic selections were just a shot in the

dark, since I had no idea which were effective against osteomalacia... bone infection, my primary concern.

The total tab for all the supplies and drugs was less than four dollars. Haven't things changed? But as I mentioned, much as the American tobacco companies, sell their cigarettes for less in poorer countries, so do the US drug companies sell their pharmaceuticals for less in poorer countries. Since the drugs are so cheap to make, Big Pharma still garners a substantial profit, even at the reduced overseas prices.

Barely having walked out of the store, I then thought of Rosa, ergo I went back in and purchased a twelve-pack of condoms, for about fifty cents. The Mexican pharmacy carried American *Trojans*, and these too were much cheaper in Mexico City, than in the United States. Still another case of American companies screwing over their own people... pun intended. Hobbling back to the hotel room, I stopped along the way to grab a half dozen tacos, and a cold bottle of coke, from a kindly old sidewalk vendor.

When the elderly man saw my minor limp and the ribbon of dried blood going down my shin, he refused my money; still, I tried to force the money on

him, nevertheless he refused to accept it. He held-up his hand to block my offer. Possibly, there is no act of kindness more pure than the generosity of a poor person. To give, when you have practically nothing, is true caring. Such kindness carries its own type of power. Just maybe, the Mexicans back then were the most gracious people I've ever meant, barring the aforementioned family maid in Spain, Carmen. Why is it that in the catholic countries, I've witnessed so many poor people, while those churches appear so architecturally grand, and so often the church parishioners live so comfortably?

“I care not for a man's religion whose dog and cat are not the better for it.”

Abraham Lincoln

No one shares, quite like the poor! The state with the lowest income per capita is Mississippi, and that same State donates the most to charities and homeless people! What does that tell you? You might want to carefully consider your response to that question, in the context of your religion. When multibillionaires donate a few million dollars, said donations are not only tax write-offs, but frequently

great advertising. So how generous are they, especially considering their overall net worth? But what if they gave all they had, or half of what they had, so they actually felt the pinch of the gift? It is my contention that in general, the poorer peoples of impoverished countries share a larger percentage of their meager wealth, than ninety-nine percent of the wealthy right wing religious republicans. If you're wealthy you either disagree with that, or you might say something like, "Well, that's why they're poor; they're not smart enough to hang-on to what they have." There is some truth to that.

My last stop was a small drinking establishment adjacent to my hotel. The bar was nothing more than a converted newspaper stand which had a large green canvas awning held-up with four thick bamboo poles. Under that canvas, there were four tiny tables with two chairs each. Three very fast shots of bourbon, and I headed up to my room.

Back in my room, I ate five tacos and saved the last one for the next morning. During my much needed hot shower, I carefully washed the wound with the recently purchased sulfur soap, trying to force some of the soap deep down into the small wound. It's difficult to get sulfur soap in the US, since

it is so good at preventing and treating a few fungal, as well as many bacterial infections of the skin. Such simple soaps are now often prescriptions in the US, that way the price can be jacked-up, and so big Pharma in essence steals a little more of your hard earned cash, always leveraging human health against their outrageous profits. Yet even today, you can get a bar of sulfur for twenty cents in Mexico. In the US, a bar of sulfur soap will cost you around five dollars, as if it's a real luxury, even though sulfur is an extremely cheap, because it is highly plentiful. All things considered, to make a bar of sulfur soap, costs about four cents.

After washing, I decided not to use the gauze, but instead, just spread the small wound open and poured in a few drops of iodine, and worked the wound to allow the iodine to better penetrate. Laying in bed, I studied Knifeman's knife, the handle of which appeared to be made of some kind of bone. Being extremely tired, the absurd little thought occurred to me that the bone-handled knife had been stuck in my bone. Although the knife was shaped like the archetypal switchblade it was not. The blade was a little thicker than that of the flimsy classic switchblade, and the handle was heavier. For years, I

kept the knife, till finally it was stolen out of my car, along with my car radio, one night in Boulder, Colorado. Loosing the radio was not a big deal, but I truly hated losing Knifeman's knife. Occasionally, when looking at the sinister weapon, I'd contemplate the possibility that it had been used to kill various people. This invariably made me think about the night on Esteban's front porch.

Later, I would learn that Knifeman's body had been dumped somewhere in the Xochimilco canals (floating gardens) in the south Mexico City. Gangs also used the sewage canals. Four of the gang, had hoisted Knifeman's body into an old black steamer trunk, along with a piece of heavy concrete, which had been the top of a birdbath. Trunk in hand, the four guys waved down a taxi, loaded the trunk into the cab's trunk, and told the driver that they were taking their grandma a trunk of heavy family heirlooms, mostly books. Once at the canal, they paid the cab driver, unloaded the trunk, and lifted it onto a small boat. Two hours before sunrise they poled the boat to the deepest part of the canal, and before pushing it overboard, they stabbed assorted holes in the trunk, to facilitate its sinking, and insuring that the gases of decomposition would not collect in the

truck.

Owing to the ever increasing growth of Mexico's murderous drug cartels, bodies are still being deposited on the bottom of those dark little canals, unless the cartel wants to make a statement, and then they torture the victim and leave the body hanging-up for everyone to see, usually with various body parts missing. I've heard that the bucolic little canals are now called, 'the gangster's underwater graveyard.' This steamer trunk thing reminded me of the psychopathic old farmer, who'd put the kittens in the gunny sack with the piece of concrete and heaved it out into the dark little tarn. The Mexican families living along the canals knew never to lookout their windows, especially if they hear noises, late at night. No one in their right mind wants to be a witness to a body being discarded.

During the day, those quant inky canals are a fairly popular tourist attraction. Tourists ride along in small flat colorfully painted boats, while their silent boatman uses a pole to slowly push the boat along those pastoral waterways. It's similar to the gondolas, which are poled through the canals of Venice, but instead of ancient buildings being on either side, it's peoples backyards, fields, and woods. Every now and

then, the boatman's pole, will hit something on the bottom of the canal, but he knows better than to make an issue of it. Its' green grassy banks are covered with verdant bushes, trees, and gardens filled with colorful flowers. The humble homes, bordering the canals, have yards filled with running laughing children, and sometimes laundry drying on the line. Vendor boats sometimes pull-up to the tourist boats to sell souvenirs, snacks and drinks, and still other boats contain musicians, to serenade the tourists for tips.

<https://images.search.yahoo.com/search/images?p=floating+gardens+in+southern+mexico+city+mexico+map&fr=yfp-t-s&imgurl=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia-cdn.tripadvisor.com%2Fmedia%2Fphoto-s%2F01%2F82%2F1b%2Fb7%2Ffloating-gardens-of-xochimilco.jpg#id=0&iurl=https%3A%2F%2Fmedia-cdn.tripadvisor.com%2Fmedia%2Fphoto-s%2F01%2F82%2F1b%2Fb7%2Ffloating-gardens-of-xochimilco.jpg&action=click>

While all this serene sweetness, transpires above the water's surface, just beneath that dark surface are

countless decomposing bodies and piles of various types of murderous evidence, mostly guns. Everyone knows about what's on the canal's bottom, but the police don't bother to look. The canals were, and still are, like a 'free zone' for dumping whatever body or other evidence you don't want to be found. You might say, the dark waters are nutrient rich, fertilized by violence. Correspondingly, nobody swims in the canals.

At first, thinking that the police would surely investigate the night Knifeman died, I wondered what Esteban's gang might have said. *Did they incriminate me?* It occurred to me that, if I ever went there again, I might see Knifeman's new running shoes being worn by one of Esteban's guys.

Witnessing the death of Knifeman had been more than intense, just like when I killed Fritz, the cat belonging to my Grandma's neighbor, just like when my three friends and I speared the shark in the fish trap, just like the two teens being machine-gunned, just like all the dead bulls and horses in the bullring, just like the man who had drown on my beach, and just like the little white man, who was stabbed to death in the gas station on 14th street. It dawned on me, that for a non-combat guy, I'd witnessed my

share of violence, but more death was soon to follow.

Once I was done with my shower, I wiped Knifeman's razor-sharp blade clean, with a piece of the gauze soaked in iodine. I used the weapon to cut a three inch slice of adhesive tape, fashion it into the classic butterfly shape, then used it to pull-close the wound, with minimal contact with the cut itself. Thank God the blade wasn't rusty. I prayed that Knifeman hadn't used the knife to clean his toe nails, or scrap-off calcium build-up, on his toilet bowl.

With food in my stomach, I used the coke to swallow two of each of the two types of antibiotics, and two of the codeine pills. Slowly, I began to feel more confident, more self-sufficient. The narcotics, combined with, the caffeine of the coke, and the three shots of bourbon, gave me the allusion of the courage, and that's when I thought that I understood something about how important brain chemistry was. The killing of Knifeman made me contemplate the fact that it seemed that men could be roughly divided into four groups: fighters, lovers, sociopaths, and everyday guys. Of course, the truth is that we're all a certain amount of each, but being young and high on booze and codeine, these thoughts seemed profound. It's funny how drugs can mimic wisdom.

The fighters are often brave; perchance, even fearless. They tend to love a good fight, so much so, that problematically they may sometimes seek them out, but as a rule, they don't make great lovers, basically because they don't truly love; otherwise, they wouldn't like to fight so much. Lovers often hate to fight and may or may not appear cowardly, but should the situation arise and with enough provocation, they can fight but take no pleasure in the deed, ergo they're not usually great fighters. Of course, the lovers are usually more sensitive to the sexual desires of a woman, most likely because they genuinely adore and/or love them. A few men are both, but just a few. The smallest of the four groups are men, who love to hurt and kill, the sociopaths. This ruthless group may have great sex drives, but don't understand love, other than self love. They simply use sex for pleasure and as a control mechanism. The women they have sex with, tend to be masochistic, with a poor self image. Such women are generally somewhat foolish, and primarily, if not solely, concerned with having sex. The everyday guys, have sex but aren't too proficient at it, and can fight, but marginally. These ideas were born of alcohol and codeine, and seemed so profound, when I was twenty-five. How many pop psychology articles

have been penned, which are just that foolish?

To say the least, that day had been overly eventful. It had started with the museum tour, where I'd watched an inspired academic in action, which would later inspire me to seek my own interest. I'd made new friends, gotten stoned, had a long run through the Chapultepec jungle and part of the city, and thereby I'd been sort of accepted into a group. The best part of the day had been meeting Rosa, a prospective new beautiful girlfriend. The worst part of the day had been that evening, when I'd choked-out a killer, and had survived a knife attack, then witnessed his execution, and lastly, I'd managed to take care of myself medically, thanks to the pharmacy. Probably because of the codeine and the booze, I completely over-looked the fact that I never should have hung-out with those guys to begin with. MC certainly wasn't anything like Mobile. All-in-all, it was a day to remember!

After brushing my teeth, I put what was left of the *Coca-Cola* and the one taco on the dresser, under the air-conditioning vent, for the next morning, which turned out to be the next afternoon, fourteen hours later. Perhaps, it wasn't the codeine and booze that made me sleep so long, because for me a pain

pill is usually a stimulant, and a strong one will make me have pleasant hallucinations, which are usually beautiful women, as well as beach and mountains scenes. Odd as it may seem, I think the reason I slept so well was that I was out of Mobile, and my life was no longer frustrating and boring.

After spending too many monotonous years in Mobile, I was at last free. And while many people would have considered my marriage to be ideal, I'm sorry to say that once I meant Rosa, I no longer felt bad about leaving my good wife, and perhaps that too is why I slept so soundly, the night Knifeman died. It's one of the best night's sleep I've even had. The best occurred when I was six years old. I went to sleep on the front screened porch of our family home, and oddly enough, I woke-up in the bright sunlight the next day, still on the porch. A great night's sleep has been nearly nonexistent for me. When you suffer with insomnia, sleep becomes so desirable, that the rare great night's sleep becomes historically memorable.

Life always requires some suffering and pain; to be resolved in dreams, so that wisdom may be born.

The Science of Sleep by Millow A. Waurey

It was evening, and the sun was still barely above the horizon, yet even though the sun was extremely bright. Strangely, it was comfortable to stare directly at, as if it were only a yellow spot on an oil painting. It was balanced right on the far end of the runway. *Take-off will be directly into the blinding sun.* The grass was growing-up through the cracks in the thick reinforced concrete, but not enough to effect the use of the landing strip. It was somewhere in Spain, and the plane sitting next to me was the old classic the DC-3. It was in mint condition, just like it had rolled off the assembly line. The light of the setting sun played off its mirrored aluminum fuselage. Oddly, there were no numbers or markings on the plane. It was a comfort to be close to the familiar aircraft, like it was an old friend. Hanging-out at runways on various military bases, I'd often seen these workhorse planes, and had frequently climbed inside them. Security wasn't a big deal, back then. For some reason, I enjoyed the way the planes smelled, a mixture of leather, electronics, fuel, and hydraulic fluid. Dad was standing next to me and talking sincerely to me; unlike in real life, he seemed to care about me.

“A good DC-3 will always get you home, Joey. Just don’t bring that dead Mexican back with you. Make sure that you throw the body out, while you’re still well out over the water, and at least fifty miles from shore. It’s only a dead body, so it doesn’t matter. Besides, some people are at their best when they’re dead!” Dad advised, with his rare effort at humor.

The body was evidently already loaded onboard. Dad didn’t seem to care about a dead body, so why should I? I needed to take a leak, before I got onboard the plane for the long flight, since there was no telling how long we’d be in the air, so I woke-up and limped into the black and white marble bathroom to pee, and briefly turned on the light, to check-out my wounded somewhat stiff knee. Cutting off the light, I climbed back under the covers to finish the rare and glorious fourteen hour sleep. Dreaming is when the pituitary produces beta-endorphin, a protein ten to one hundred times the potency of morphine. That’s why dreams are glorious and why no one likes being awoken from a dream. It’s quite similar to a heroin addict having the needle yanked from his vein, when there’s still drug in the syringe.

Some dreams really help, so maybe that's why the DC-3 dream is my only recurring dream. In that dream, it is always great to be so wholeheartedly accepted by Dad, since in waking life that never happened. Once I had confessed to soaping the school windows, that ended our good relationship. Those DC-3 dreams were the most comfort, I ever received from Dad! When I got-up the next day, I was shocked and pleased that I'd slept so long. There was some obvious swelling in the knee, the pain wasn't too bad, but the knee was somewhat stiff. The wound looked fairly good, but the pain was nagging. The surrounding tissue wasn't hot, and there was no bad odor coming from the wound. Hungry, I ate the remaining taco, took more antibiotics, and one more codeine tablet, washed them down with the the remainder of the coke. Standing in the warm shower, I gazed down at the seemingly endless sprawling city. *What will I do today?* Again using the sulfur soap, I washed right over the wound and the tape, leaving the ultra-sticky butterfly tape stuck in place. Now in old age, I still use sulfur soap, for cuts and abrasions. In Mobile, I buy it at small Mexican-owned stores. Sulfur soap stinks a little, but the smell rinses off, unlike the various scars and the guilt I feel for so much of my life.

All that day, I kept thinking of Rosa, her exotic figure, exquisite eyes and those sumptuous dark lips, how she'd felt, walking down the road that night, arm and arm. Repeatedly, I thought about how natural and immediate our attraction, and how easy it had been. Still, I didn't want to deal with the Knifeman's murder, and wanted to remain unassociated with it, but if I went to see Rosa, I was afraid of being confronted by the police about Knifeman's bloody demise. Much of that day, my mind jumped back and forth, between thinking about Rosa, and the death of Knifeman. My mind tends to revisit those things it can't resolve. It's drawn to dilemmas.

In my overly paranoid mind Esteban's place was no doubt staked-out by the authorities, an intense and thorough investigation was ongoing, people were being grilled by the authorities, and if I went there, I'd likely be ensnared. I was thinking in terms of how I knew the police to function in the US, and how I'd seen them operate on the silver screen. No stone would be left unturned. Having no idea about the nature of the disagreement between Knifeman and Esteban, I assumed that it probably was over drugs or money, with one of them figuring the other owed

them something; little pieces of selfish gray matter going ballistic, like small babies screaming, ‘Mine! Give me,’ much as political parties and countries now do.

What’s more dangerous than unchecked greed and fear?

The Sunny End by Adrian M. Wolrey

There was also the possibility that Knifeman’s group was looking to avenge his death, and if the word had gotten-out that I was the one who’d choked him out, while he was being stabbed, I might be one of the targets. Ergo, logic dictated that I stay away from that part of the city. *There are millions of women in MC, so what’s one, whom I’ve just barely meant?* Still, I couldn’t stop thinking about Rosa. She’d seemed to know me, and was so comfortable and sexy. As things turned-out, it was just sex, I hadn’t seen the quirks, which would later be less than desirable.

With my wife, the abrupt phony parental excommunication trick to get me to marry, as well as her mysterious reversal about wanting kids, caused

the romantic spark to quickly dwindle. But initially at least, with Rosa I'd felt a searing flame, and kept thinking about how Rosa had said she was her own woman. I wondered if that was a warning, not to fall for her, or did she just want me to know she was available, and unattached? I preferred to believe the latter. Try as I might, I couldn't get her spectacular lips and perfect figure out of my mind. It was a battle, logic versus DNA.

For most of that day, I only thought about two things: Rosa and the death of Knifeman, and try as I might, evil Knifeman's death weighed on me, not because I felt guilty, but because I might be perceived as guilty by the authorities. I hated the fact that I wasn't more like Dad. Dad wouldn't have had the slightest fear, concerning the killing of someone, especially someone such as Knifeman. Often fathers will try to give their sons advice, saying such things as, "Do the right thing..." or "Think about what Jesus would do." But, when I was a small child, my father never gave me any such advice, except for the killing of those, who needed killing, and a very few other things. Most likely he just assumed that all other forms of advice were simply obvious, and therefore didn't require his iterating them. What he did tell me

was that there were too many people on the planet, so if one of them was making my life miserable, and I'd tried to reason with them, then just get rid of them... no big deal, only don't get caught. There was little doubt that my impeccably honest Dad had killed, and not just for the military. This is not to say that he enjoyed killing, or killed without just motive, but Dad was a man in full measure, and not as defined by polite society. At the same time, though he was never overweight, he often behaved like a gentle Santa Claus, being a gracious host to house guests, honest in all his business dealings, and no one was kinder to the neighborhood children. I was the only kid he excommunicated, and all due to the aforementioned soaping of the school windows.

“You're a smart boy Joey, just kill the guy, and don't get caught, and don't feel bad about it. You can't let someone destroy your life, no matter what you see on that television, or in the movies. Sometimes the police are not the right answer; besides, most cops are corrupt, and even the decent police follow laws usually made by dishonest politicians. Cops don't care about justice as much as they want to make an arrest. Though necessary, they're too often just brainwashed followers. Worse

yet, lawyers turn practically everything into a circus. Juries are made-up of well intended average folks, who often pick, whichever attorney puts on the best show, or who looks the best, or who dresses the best, or whoever makes them feel warm and fuzzy. The lawyers are largely crooks, and amazingly most of them actually think they're not. A judge may care about justice, but lawyers rarely do. If you've tried everything else and it hasn't worked, and you have to kill someone, plan it carefully in a dark vacuum, and never ever tell a soul. Holding such a powerful secret will only make you stronger. Killing a hostile enemy is the right thing. Bring it down hard and fast, without hesitation, son. Kill without guilt, or pride. There is a part of each man designed to kill, and enjoys killing, just like breathing, but try not to be like that, except when necessary. No matter what people may tell you, killing is sometimes a good thing, and absolutely required at times. Just kill, then move on with your life. Don't tell anyone, that I gave you this talk. Am I clear?" Dad lovely instructed me.

It's hard to remember how young I was, when Dad first began giving me that sage advice; if I recall correctly, it was around age four. With slight variations, he repeated that advice about once or

twice a year, until I finally graduated from that military high school. No doubt, Dad had killed a lot of people during the war, but been raised in a ‘flop-house,’ a nice way of saying a whorehouse, a place where rooms could be rented by the hour. It was Dad’s job to clean the rooms and run errands for the customers and girls: food, liquor, beer, soap, clean towels, etc. Later, I found this out from some of the relatives on Dad’s side of the family. Growing-up witnessing the seedier side of life, likely had a positive effect on Dad, in that it had made him live his life in an honest, and impeccably decisive manner. Perhaps, working in the flop-house had made Dad the kind of man, who couldn’t tolerate men, who were unkind to, or talked badly of women, and women who were dishonest.

“If a guy doesn’t like a woman, well then, he should just leave her... be done with her. Don’t be mean to her or run her down, simply leave and go find a different woman. Most guys don’t think about the fact that it was their own foolishness, which caused them to choose her in the first place.” Dad might say.

Nor could Dad tolerate thieves. When Dad was twelve, another kid tried to steal Dad’s bicycle and

Dad tried to kill him with an icepick. The kid got away. Fortunately, Dad didn't succeed, but then, Dad was very young. On the other hand, Dad got his bike back. My aunt, Dad's sister, who'd seen it happen, told me about the incident. Dad was born with a bit of a killer instinct. The war had harnessed his natural tendency to be used in a socially acceptable manner, napalming countless Japanese soldiers on various Pacific islands, and sinking enemy ships. In the process, Dad dodged a lot of bullets and flack.

When Mom, Dad, and I were visiting relatives in San Diego, every time someone brought-up Dad's formative years at the flop-house, he did his level best to change the topic. Consequently, there was a fair chance that Dad had dealt with more than his share of unacceptable people, at the flophouse. He never actually admitted it was a whorehouse, yet he didn't deny it. Dad learned to shoot when he was four, when he lived out on the Arizona desert, before they moved to California, and the flophouse. Once, I asked Dad when he'd learned to shoot a gun, and he said he was so young that he couldn't remember. Then, I asked him, if he'd shot anyone outside the war, and he turned as if someone had called him, and walked away. Certain things had no doubt happened

at that flophouse, which may have mandated that Dad act.

Despite these harsh things, Dad also stressed the importance of doing anonymous good deeds, for which there would be no thanks: picking-up the neighbors trash, before the wind scattered it, repairing a broken fence for someone who couldn't, putting money in a poor woman's purse, anonymously paying a power bill for someone whose power is about to be turned off, helping a person with funeral expenses, buying food for the hungry, helping women to change a flat tire, etc. While he was all about helping the deserving, he was completely against organized charities, or helping beggars on the street.

“The last thing the *American Cancer Society* wants is to cure cancer. If they did they'd immediately be out of business. So if you donate to the *American Cancer Society*, you might as well be throwing your cash in the trash.” As for those guys asking for dough out on the street, Dad felt that most were con men, and wouldn't work, if they were given a good job.

“Sure, some are truly in need, but how do you sort them out, when you only get to see them on a corner, without any meaningful conversation?” He'd

say.

Dad always said that if you want to be charitable, give your money to someone, you know is seriously in need. I've tried to teach those things to my daughter, including the killing of those who deserve it. However, my child is a truly gentle young lady, with a markedly beautiful feminine spirit. Nonetheless, there just may be a hard little tangle of dangerous neurons buried deep somewhere in her gentle gray matter, not so much owing to my advice, but because of her mother's questionably cruel nucleotide sequences, or perhaps due to the fact that her mother's family was far from kind. Saying that her mother's side of the family wasn't kind to my daughter is like saying, Hitler wasn't good to the Jews. What's amazing is that both Hitler and my daughter's family members probably think they're good people.

It's an understatement to say there wasn't time to reason with Knifeman; besides, it wasn't just me, who'd killed him. There wasn't any real guilt for my participation, since Knifeman didn't give me much choice. Yet even though I didn't directly kill him, and even after Dad's lectures, Knifeman's death, to a certain degree, chewed on me, but mostly because of

the possibility of the police coming after me. My saving grace was that neither Rosa nor any of Esteban's gang knew where I lived, and MC was just too big for them to find me, and I didn't reside close to Esteban's area. For all they knew, I lived by Chapultepec Park.

Albeit, old age has somehow given me some meager conscience, it has actually lessened my sympathy for people like Knifeman. The older I get, the less patience I have for certain peoples, as well as for people who express time-wasting passive aggression, and other types of foolishness. Life is too short to have to put-up with greedy idiots. Most likely, I probably need to work on that, so I don't alienate too many people, becoming a grumpy old man. Still, here in Mobile, I'd fit right in, a town populated with more than its' share of grumpy old men.

As always, my Dad was right. He provided a few other important lectures, i.e., the lecture on condoms, immediately after being with Anna. He also told me that no matter what anyone said, no matter how good or intelligent, no one honestly had a clue what happens to you after you die... no one; no matter how complex, wise, or old the religion.

Still he never discussed his position on there being a God. And, that if someone asked what my beliefs are I should just say agnostic, to avoid unnecessary conflict. Dad taught me how to bluff in poker. Moreover, he told me how important it is for certain types of people to remain uncertain of whether I'm dangerous. Too bad, I wasn't a better student, but perhaps I learned just enough to skate through life, and make it to old age.

Dad's life had been largely consumed by combat in WWII, intelligence work in the Korean war, antisubmarine missions, intelligence gathering during the first few years of Vietnam, as well as, high altitude stuff during the cold war, and of course Mom used-up a lot of Dad's retirement time. With retirement, he went from worrying about protecting the free world to taking care of the house and yard, teaching the neighbor kids poker and math, and dancing with Mom. In addition, Mom and Dad enjoyed traveling around the country in their little RV. As a child, he'd probably learned all of the house repair things, from doing maintenance in the whorehouse. Even after he retired, we didn't spend time together. He never forgave me for soaping the school windows.

However, my Dad and I did once go to a football game, together. It was probably at Mom's insistence. It wasn't hard to tell that Dad didn't care about going anywhere with me. We played poker a lot, before I was six, and shared a few games of tennis in my teens, but again, that was also only at Mom's urging. Those few things represented the totality of my life with Dad: the one football game, the poker before second grade, and a couple dozen games of tennis one summer. As a child, we always had dinner together, but Dad tended not to speak with me, unless I'd done something wrong. He must have really disdained me, since I love nothing better than to be with my child, of course she never soaped any windows. She a far better young person than I ever was.

My Dad and I were different as night and day, and just about as far apart as a father and son could be. Neither one of us enjoyed that football game. The tennis games were just okay, and ended once Mom stopped insisting. The problem was that I wasn't a good son and war had left Dad with an extremely serious perspective about what to do with his time. He worked long and hard to protect his country. His life truly made a difference. Indeed, his generation

was the greatest. And while every generation has its' failings, my Dad's generation only had one... they failed to see that the military industrial complex they'd built to save the world from Germany and Japan, would become a self-serving, ever greedy, killing machine, which would bleed the country dry of its' tax dollars, and encourage the death of too many innocents.

Many nights, Dad would come home, in sweat stained clothes, eat a quick snack, brush his teeth, take a shower, then he be right back out the door, returning to work. Sometimes, he'd pack a bag, and say he had to catch a hop (a flight) to somewhere. Rarely, he'd mention where he was headed. The military was his primary focus in life. Many times when he'd come home, he looked like death warmed over: pale, dark circles under his eyes, stooped posture, etc. Dad was a gravely serious military man, as if the security of the United States of America was his responsibility alone.

His deadly earnest perspective started on December 7th 1941. He was on the battleship, *USS Oklahoma* in Pearl Harbor, when it took four torpedoes, during the Japanese attack. As the ship turned turtle, Dad walked onto the ship's hull. Then,

the Japanese planes strafed the hull and Dad dove into the water. After the attack, he spent the day using a small rowboat to haul dead bodies out of the harbor. Throughout World War II, he flew both fighters and bombers, in support of US Marine island-operations in the Pacific, as well as against enemy shipping, and so, he sunk a few ships. He was shot down once, that I know of, by anti-aircraft fire from a battleship, and was later rescued. Dad wasn't big on providing details, other than to say that he wasn't hurt too bad in the actual crash. A few of his teeth had been loosened. However, as the plane was sinking, he couldn't get the canopy open, so he put both feet on the instrument panel, grabbed the canopy handle, and pulled for all he was worth. In so doing, he hurt his hip. Sometimes on cold days that hip would give him a limp. Most of what I know about Dad came from his military buddies, and old newspaper clippings. I'm sure there was considerably more things to know, but plainly it's now too late find out.

During the Korean War, Dad was assigned to headquarters Tokyo and to General Douglas MacArthur's command ship, the *USS Mount McKinley*. He worked as an intelligence liaison officer for the

general, in both locations. While the US occupied Japan, post-WWII, MacAuthor and his staff (Dad included) mostly worked out of a large room containing: various intel reports, reconnaissance photos, countless files, supply orders and deliveries, personnel records, battle plans, etc., penned to various vertical cork boards, and a big plywood platform table in the middle of the room to model Korea, as well as a couple of desks scattered around the 54 square meter room. Individual offices were set-up through-out the rest of the building. The room adjacent to the above mentioned 'war-room' was 'communications,' filled with radio gear. Communications was primarily with critical senior officers in the field, and aboard ships, as well as with Washington, via shortwave channels, some encrypted.

After the occupation, the US returned the building to the original owner, the *Dai-ichi Life Insurance Company*. During critical periods of the war, men went long hours without sleep, which made the common cold a serious enemy. Consequently, it became imperative that personnel be able to sleep, whenever the opportunity presented itself, and that they perform optimally, when the shit

was hitting the fan. Consequently, there was barbiturates for sleep, and benzedrine and dexedrine (go-fast pills) to stay awake. Dad never took any of those, since he could have slept in the middle of a bomb blast. He only used bourbon to find his way to dreamland, and coffee to stay awake.

He'd done some work helping with the plans for the giant amphibious invasion of Inchon, which involved roughly 75,000 men and 261 ships. It not quite as large as D-day, but it was far more successful, or perhaps I should say not as disastrous. Dad was barely in his thirties, and he was at the decision making center of what were then, the world's most critical event. As stated, Dad's life made a real difference in the world.

One of his jobs, while working with MacArthur, had something to do with anticipating the tidal fluctuations for the Inchon landing, and helping to coordinate the corresponding airstrikes. To measure and predict the tides, Dad flew several reconnaissance missions photographing the tidal changes at various times and dates, as well he filmed inshore enemy installations. Besides all the massive amounts of shooting, one of the riskiest things about that invasion was the extreme variance in the tides,

approximately 31 feet. Correctly estimating the tidal level was absolutely critical for the landing craft. There were 75,000 men to be put ashore that day, and over 260 naval vessels were involved. If the tidal variance had been not properly calculated, the results could have been catastrophic.

The only thing Dad ever said about the great Douglas MacArthur was, “MacArthur is the most imperial human I’ve ever meant. He was highly intelligent, and when it came to the Japanese, he tended to be forgiving; at least, more than the rest of the generals and admirals, as well as most of the American politicians and citizens. It seemed like everyone wanted their pound of flesh, whereas MacArthur wanted to help the Japanese, and assist them in rebuilding their destroyed country, rather than punishing them. He believed in forgiveness. He more or less respected their traditions and treated them as an ally. Because of that fact, he made a lot of enemies, back in the United States. Maybe that’s why that politician Truman hated him. But, MacArthur was smart to do that. We didn’t want a rebel faction of Japanese fighting us, while we were dealing with North Korea, and just look at what an ally Japan has become. If we’d treated them poorly after the war,

they might now be affiliated with Russia.”

Another time, Dad said something to the effect, “Although aloof, the general seemed to radiate confident and remained solidly focused on the critical issues, and there were an awful lot of issues. The general controlled the Japanese war crimes outcome, by controlling the judges.”

Other than those few things, Dad had nothing to say about General Douglas MacArthur. Lots of the military generals thought that MacArthur, suffered with a narcissistic personality, and that’s what led to his fall from power, but I don’t think my Dad felt that way. Dad worked with the famous general on a near daily basis. Dad felt that if the general was a narcissist, so what? He got the job done.

At headquarters Tokyo, Dad also had periodic occasions to coordinate with the US Marines. A large portion of the marines were led by a Colonel named, Lewis Burwell Puller. Dad said that the man was brave and highly decorated, but that Colonel Puller needlessly sent men into, “... obvious no-win situations, where there was nothing to be gained. I sometimes wondered if he did that for reasons of self-glorification. He didn’t seem to mind his men dying. In many cases, even if they’d won, there was no

strategic advantage to the win. In my opinion, Puller simply wasted lives for no good reason.”

Dad felt that the man fully realized there was no strategic value in certain missions, regardless of whether they were won or lost. Consequently, Dad appeared to have little respect for Colonel Puller, soon to be promoted to Brigadier General. Years later, Dad read that General Puller’s son had been severely injured, while serving in Vietnam, and that the serious injury had caused General Puller to actually cry; something which my Dad never did, and something (the then) Colonel Puller never did for the men in Korea.

“That’s a real shame; it’s too bad that it took his son’s misfortune for him to feel the sting war. I’m sure sorry his boy was hurt, but to the best of my knowledge, Puller never shed a tear for all those guys, that he ordered into those pointless “no-win” situations in Korea. But then, maybe that’s the kind of person you need for war. At least it’s good that he can feel for his son. I’m sorry for both of them.” Dad calmly stated.

Years later, Dad flew both barrier patrol, in totally blacked-out Connies, and anti-submarine patrol in P2-Vs. Subsequently, he had something to

do with the high altitude reconnaissance stuff, but never said anything about it... not word one. The only way I found out about that high altitude recon stuff was that I once noticed that Dad was wearing an unusual looking tie tack. The small gold-colored tie tack possessed a small one inch metal relief of some sort. The tiny cast metal appeared to be the image of some strange little machine or gadget. The metal image looked like a box with two cylinders, laying parallel to each other, on its top. When I asked Dad what it was, he simply ignored the question. He was wearing the tie tack at a semiformal dinner party, we were hosting at the house. Mom liked formal and semi-formal parties, because they were an excuse for her to lay-out her fine silver, and to wear her expensive gowns, and gold jewelry. As the evening wore on, and the drinking had dependably relaxed the crowd, I questioned one of the guests, an older pilot friend of my Dad's, about Dad's odd tie tack. The Captain was pretty smashed and feeling overly conversational, and he was gawking my girlfriend, who was at least thirty years his junior. But that was okay; after all, he had been a combat pilot in WWII, so it was sort of to be expected.

“That thing on your Dad's tie-tack is one of the

cameras he uses, when he's cruising through the stratosphere... right out there on the edge of the infinite big black. Ever imagine what that must be like, Joey? The stars are so bright, when you're that high up, you feel like you can reach-out and touch them. Yeah, he just doesn't just sit behind a desk and push paper. Every now and then, he wears a space suit, when he's flying dragon-lady. He even helps to negotiate with the money-hungry companies which make those onboard cameras." The old pilot knowingly commented, while only slightly slurring his words. *Holy shit!*

And so, because of a simple tie tack and a brief inebriated comment, by a pilot guest, perhaps I gained the smallest amount of insight into my father's mysterious tight-lipped world. Indeed, I believed that the tie-tack was a tiny metallic image of an actual high altitude reconnoissance camera, but I found it difficult to believe that Dad was then flying, since he was fairly old for a pilot, around forty-eight at the time. It was an understatement to say that the wars (WWII and Korea), Nuremberg, and the cold war with Russia, had left my Dad more than a bit on the serious side.

Smart folks look serious, because they're thinking about something important. The monkey looks solemn, because he has an itch. Fools wear the mask of seriousness, thinking they look intelligent, if they stickup their lips. At least two of the three are honest.

All Those Projects by Adder W. Milliams

To Dad, a man involved in such important world issues where reliability is the name of the game, I had to have looked like a blithering irresponsible idiot. In almost all ways, I was a disappointment to my Father, and that may be my greatest regret in life. My Dad came just about as close as one can get to giving his absolute full measure to his country; at least, without dying in battle. Each year, Dad actually paid excess federal income tax, and simply relied on the good graces of the *IRS* to reimburse his overpayment. Like clockwork, the *IRS* always refunded Dad. Dad didn't question their honesty. A few times, I've gone in to the local *IRS* office seeking info, and although many people passionately hate the *IRS*, I've always found the agents themselves to be good, downright helpful people. People may feel that

they shouldn't have to pay taxes, or that they are asked to pay too much; nevertheless, that doesn't mean that the people employed by the *IRS* are at fault. If only they could make the ultra-rich pay their fair share. I like the idea of a flat tax.

To the very best of my knowledge, throughout his entire life, my Dad never shed a tear, never... not one! Even when his parents died, he didn't show the slightest emotion. Mom, Dad, and I were watching the news on TV, when a long distance came into the house. With the ringing of the phone, Dad reached forward and turned the volume down on the TV. It was a call from his sister, telling Dad that his mother had died. After he hung-up the phone, Dad turned the volume of the TV back-up and just kept watching, as if nothing had happened. Even at the end of his own life, when the physicians decided to withhold Dad's intake of fluids and food, and Dad fully understood that his time was up, he showed no emotion. Not a nanogram of neurotransmitter flowed in his limbic brain. He just sort of raised his eyebrows, shrugged, and gave a slight smile, as if to say, "Oh, well. It's inevitable... no big deal." I was shocked that he could confront death so causally. I can only hope to be half as brave, when my time

comes.

The day before his death, Dad smiled a good bit. And while Dad's death didn't seem to bother him, his death hit me, like a freight train. It seems like his life was gone, before I ever got to know him! Dad died remaining largely a mystery to me. For a year after his death, I had to take blood pressure pills, and before his death, I'd always had slightly low blood pressure. No doubt, the measure of that grief is in proportion to the degree which I've failed him. The following, which I might have found somewhere on the internet, seems to perfectly apply to my Dad.

Why You're a Great Dad

Integrity and the courage to defend noble ideas, endure as finer monuments, than any palace or pyramid. Thundering down the halls of eternity, they define the worth of human existence, and offer a brilliant guidance, which mere words will never match.

WA Morey

Oddly enough, the only thing Dad displayed contrary to that spartan image was that he loved to

dance, and many different kinds of dance: swing, ballroom, jitter-bug, even square dancing. Judging by his whistling, and the stations he selected on the radio, his favorite type of music was big band. Glen Miller, Artie Shaw, and the Dorsey brothers were some of his favorites. While he frequently whistled and danced to their songs, he never sang. As a young man in California, he would go to dances on the *Long Beach Municipal Pier*, and dance and sweat so much, that he would have to take along a change of clothes. After a couple hours of dancing, and he was dripping wet, he'd go in the men's room, wash-off in the sink, put on his second set of clothes, then he was back out on the dance floor, for more dancing. I found out about Dad dancing at the pier, from Dad's younger sister, my dear aunt Eve. She said he was a regular Fred Astaire.

Dad stopped dancing in his early eighties. Where the stresses of war and his demanding job had probably acted to shorten his life, dancing may have acted to reverse the stress-induced aging. Perhaps, dancing could be an effective medical treatment for old age and *PTSD*; still, dancing never stopped his war-related nightmares, nothing stopped his screaming in his dreams, only his death. The process

of Dad's death began one evening, when I'd taken him to the emergency room of the hospital for low blood pressure. In that respect, his death was somewhat my fault.

While Dad and I waited in the emergency room, he was surrounded by sick people, coughing and blowing their noses. It sounded like a half dozen people in the ER waiting room had bronchitis or pneumonia, and so Dad soon contracted pneumonia, and died shortly thereafter. Even with the latest antibiotics, he was just too old to fight the massive lung infection. Of all the people I've ever known, I admire my Dad the most.

While you might be thinking that it is normal for most men to admire their Dads above all others, I can assure you it is not the norm. Throughout his life, Dad said terribly little about himself, maybe because he knew himself, so well. Perchance, there is an inverse correlation between people's propensity to talk about themselves, and how well they know themselves, or maybe it's just a reflection of how comfortable they are with themselves. Maybe, they're one-in-the-same, maybe not.

Dad faced his death as if it were a serene communion, or at worst, just another thing. Dad was

the living repudiation of fear. As he laid, fearlessly dying, I wondered if he wasn't trying to teach me how to die, and in so doing how to live. Once, I received a fortune cookie, which said, 'Fear is interest paid on a debt you may not owe.' To me, the word 'may' is what is most interesting about that fortune, but not if you were my Dad. Dad had faced death many times, but never paid the interest, even when the debt was finally collected. Indeed, I envied how well Dad knew himself, how he embraced the inevitable. Perhaps if you envy people for their finer traits, you're somewhat on the right track, and not too self absorbed. Of course, these tomes, attest to the fact I don't remotely approximate the caliber of my dear Dad. Most likely, I'm the rotten apple torn from the tree by hurricane, which landed somewhere in the neighboring county.

As mentioned earlier, when Dad left to serve in the Korean conflict, I was almost two. My Grandma had flown-out from Mobile to stay with Mom and I in Coronado, California. After Dad left for Korea, Mom and Grandma noticed I had developed a problem with my left hand. All day, day after day, month after month, my left hand remained closed, involuntarily clinched in a fist. However, Mom said

my hand would open and relax, whenever I fell asleep, but would again involuntarily close, upon awakening. Mom became concerned that I had some odd neurological pathology.

She took me to some military doctors, but they didn't know what to make of it. If anyone told me to open my hand, I would merely open it. But as soon as my attention was diverted away from my hand, the hand would reflectively close and stay closed, until sleep time, when the hand would relax and open, again. As stated, my Mom's mother had flown out to the West coast to visit. Mom and Grandma would often hold my hand to keep me from clenching it.

One day my Mom had gone shopping, leaving me alone with my aforementioned racist Grandma. Grandma wanted to test me to see if I knew where my father had gone, and so she asked me a question.

“Do you know where your Daddy is, Joey?”

“Yes, Grandma.” I answered.

“Where is he?” She persisted.

No doubt, she was assuming I might say something like, “Korea” or “Japan.” But, she didn't ask what country he'd gone to, but rather 'where' he was, and I gave an unexpected answer.

“In my hand.” I replied, and then opened and held out my left hand; perhaps, assuming she could see him.

Once I was again distracted, my hand subconsciously closed. My left hand stayed closed, in the described manner, for nearly two years, until Dad returned from Korean.

The day after Knifeman’s demise, it was about 3 p.m., when I finally stepped outside the hotel. My knee didn’t hurt too badly. The limp was minor, and I was seriously hungry. At a cheap nearby restaurant, I ordered a triple-egg ham and cheese omelet, a large orange juice, and finished the meal with two cups of rich dark Mexican coffee. In all the restaurants, if you ordered a meal, the coffee was complimentary. The brew was great in Mexico; just one click weaker than speed, but extremely cheap and completely legal. It also tasted more flavorful, and less bitter. Most of the Mexican coffee came from the cooler southern region of Chiapas, on the Pacific side. That state was also a major importer of a certain mind-altering white powder from South America. Soon, I would come to know the three major drug dealers for Mexico City, who received shipments from Chiapas, as well as a few other places, some as far away as

Laos.

That evening, I limped around the streets, thinking about Rosa, and the unexpected encounter with Knifeman. Mostly, I just looked in the stores windows and spoke with some of the neighborhood folks. After a few hours, the sore leg, and the language barrier were tiring, so I became content to just silently mill around, and finally ambled into a bookstore, where I'd noticed they sold a few dozen books in English. My Spanish was okay, but not so good that I'd enjoy reading an entire book in Spanish. Selecting a book by Hermann Hesse, *The Glass Bead Game*, I purchased it, and headed back toward my hotel, but as the night before, I spotted the tacos stand. The vendor, who'd treated me to the free food, the night before, was there again. He asked how my leg was, and I said it was doing fine. Again I ordered half dozen tacos, and a cold bottle of coke, from the kindly taco peddler. I reached in his cooler to grab my own coke, but in the process I dropped a ten dollar bill in the ice. Then, I also paid for my food, and returned to the hotel room. Propped-up on my bed, I ate, swallowed another codeine tablet, and took my next dose of antibiotics, drank the coke, while reading my new book. Hesse wasn't what I'd

call a skilled writer, though far better than I, but I enjoyed his philosophies. Reading has often kept me grounded, and kept my mind off my worries. The book which gave me the most joy was *Moby Dick*. Some people snap a rubber band on their wrist, some go to shrieks, others turn to meditation, but I prefer reading. For me a good book distracts and informs.

Now days, I don't remember too much about the dispassionate little book. It seems that one of the points was that the young school kids are usually taught by those, who graduate from the lower echelons of academia, not generally by the more gifted college or university folks, and perhaps that has something to do with why too few kids become inspired. The book may have implied that often it takes a genius to awaken the sleeping inquisitiveness in a child, to show them why something is terribly cool and worth studying. The book pushed the point that the elite tend to hangout with other elite, ergo the children are left to the ministrations of the less talented. In Hess's book, the intellectually elite lived in a fictionalized affluent society.

In real life, it does indeed seem that the children are generally taught by those who are academically limited, often with a degree in education, and

education courses are not exactly stimulating or challenging. Ergo, the educators, rarely if ever are burdened by curiosity, and so they are less apt to ignite the flame of cerebral interest, in their wards. They are often heard to say, "All my life, I've wanted to be a teacher." But, that desire should be proportionate to their involvement in some field of knowledge, rather than simply their aspiration to passably babble basic knowledge at a bunch of kids. They tend to be more interested in having a dependable job, than solving the pressing unknowns of the world. Certainly, teachers might like the idea of inspiring students, but how can they inspire, if they're uninspired? This is not to say that they're got good worthwhile loving people, but do you want your friendly local bus driver landing the space shuttle?

Indeed, it's a gratifying gift to inspire a child, and watch the unmistakable expression of cognitive assimilation spread across their face. Dad and beer were my early inspirations, as well as whatever book happened to be in his hand. At age three or four, Dad switched us from beer to whiskey, concurrently teaching me the art of bartending for our squadron parties. He claimed that while beer was relaxing,

whiskey increased his alertness. Regardless, because of alcohol and my Dad, I had a fairly unique introduction to education. If Dad asked a question, about something in the book he was teaching from, and I got it right, then I received a sip; small sips to the lessons could last longer, and more material got covered. We both enjoyed this, since Dad also partook in the sipping.

This may seem callus or pompous, but nonetheless I'm being completely sincere, when I say that from what I've seen in my years of academia, most of the people, who have sought and obtained a degree in education, couldn't begin to inspire a child. Not that there aren't a few brilliant people with degrees in education, just none which I've ever met. This is not to say that they aren't extremely valuable people, for indeed most of them are. But it is to say, that I've meant people with advanced degrees in education, and never suspected they'd even attended college. Nevertheless, the value of a person largely resides with their goodness, and their integrity. Still, to intellectually inspire a student requires someone who is smartly inspired, someone who burns with a fever for their field of interest, someone who can make the student feel that intellectual excitement.

People who've studied education may indeed be good, and caring people, but not exactly prodigy caliber, not what you'd consider to be capable of inspiring children. Let's face one, with mediocre teachers, America's future becomes a little less bright. On the other hand, I suppose you have to consider the teacher's abysmal pay. As the saying goes, 'you get what you pay for.' To invest in a child's education is usually the second best investment a person can make. The child's health is certainly first, since without life there is no point to education, and yes, for those of you with a more religious inclination, I'm overlooking spiritually. Such postulating is far beyond my scant comprehension.

Try to imagine the overwhelming frustration that a gifted child may be forced to endure, day after day, year after year, under the ministrations of those good and kindly, but uninspired educators. The gifted elementary student is obliged to spend eight hours a day, five days a week with their teacher. And, what if they are not compatible? What if the teacher is boring, but nice? Perchance, the school switches that student to another teacher, and then maybe another. But, what if the kid is truly brilliant and the kindly

teachers aren't? That is most likely the case for ninety-five percent of the genius kids, who make-up roughly one percent of the population. Several studies have estimated the average IQs of middle and high school teachers and the results seem to vary from 105 to 108. If a gifted child, with an IQ of 140 or higher, is taught by a teacher with such a normal but lesser IQ, it is literally like an average child being taught by a teacher, who is mentally handicapped, and in some ways, it may be worse! Indeed that is a situation worth considering. Sometimes, even if the teacher is brilliant, they never received the spark of intellectual curiosity, ergo they're nothing to pass-on but data and facts, not inspiration.

<http://anepigone.blogspot.com/2009/08/additional-information-on-iq-of.html>.

It is a forgone conclusion, that the bright student is apt to get the worst end of the stick, for with the teaching position comes power, to which the precocious student must pay homage, and possibly at the sacrifice of their own sanity. Not that teachers shouldn't have such power, but shouldn't it be wheeled by more than just loving hands. After saying

all this, I'd like to apologize to the few brilliant and inspired educators, since I do know they must exist somewhere in the vast school system, like a string of priceless black pearls flung out into the vast muck of an extra large pigpen. The Lord knows you must be frustrated, considering the peers, with whom you work. Often, I think that many kids might be better off attending a four hour lecture with a brilliant asshole, than a year listening to your average kindly teacher. Granted kindness is certainly important, but in schools, these should be a greater measure of dazzle stirred-in. Throughout elementary school, I received A's on my report card, but having graduated to middle school, I decided not to study, anymore, and didn't begin again, until I was in my thirties. That decision to stop learning might have had something to do with Anna, my Spanish prostitute.

Mediocrity oft greets genius with jealousy.

Amir O. Yarade

Can't the legislators or the school staff arrange for the children, to at least once a week, meet with some brilliant inspirational speaker in some field: math, art, history, biology, chemistry, literature,

medicine, law, psychiatry, engineering, etc.? The speakers wouldn't have to have a prepared speech, but could just talk about things they've experienced in their field, or answer questions the teachers or kids might have. Aren't America's kids worth it? Smart folks are very much like less smart folks, in that they too are spread across the 'goodness' spectrum, from saints to sociopaths.

One of the scientist, with whom I used to work, in his youth had served in the *Peace Corps*. He is a caring, yet brilliant scientist, and had taught electronics to a small group of southeast African kids, who until then, had little real education; yet, because of his small teaching effort, those students continued on with their education, and later, they all became engineers. That gifted scientist, Bill, still fondly talks about his time with those students, and with more pride, than when he discusses his impressive scientific career. Why can't we get kids more exposure to people like Bill? I'm sure those kids, who are now middle-aged men, still fondly remember Bill. Perhaps, Bill is the only gifted person I've known, who's taught young kids, and it is clear it was the high point in his life.

Herman Hess's novel also made me recall the

dapper little archeologist at the *Chapultepec Museum*, and how he had tried so hard to awaken an intellectual interest in me, which he did, but as it turned-out it was not archeology, but it would be neurophysiology. Aside from his psychiatric comments, concerning the ancient Indians of Mexico and Central America, his lessons found no niche in my mind. Nevertheless, his exuberance made me want to have an intellectual interest of my own. He burned with a passion, which inspired me, at some level, in my worthless drug-soaked brain he made me realize that I needed to do something more with my life. Ergo, the man made me profoundly aware of how I had wasted, what meager cerebral ability I possessed.

The little archeologist had made me gravely doubt my own self-worth, how I had squandered my life. He made me face the fact that I had not the slightest intellectual interest. That experience at the museum ate at me for the next several years. It was the first time, since I'd been through those withdrawals at age twelve, that I even thought about trying to become a success, whatever that is. *Why haven't I tired to find something worth devoting my life to?* The friendly older academic had shown me what

it was like to possess a 'learned passion.' Also, Mr. Brown my enthusiastic creative writing teacher, who'd been killed by the train, seven years prior, also burned with that kind of fierce intellectual passion. But with his death, so died my desire for writing, and I never wrote anything remotely creative, except for these poorly scrawled fictional works.

In Mexico City, marijuana stalled any intellectual drive I might have been able to muster, and erased any sign of inspiration, from my feeble gray mush. There's a lot of kush smokers, who believe that weed actually motivates and inspires them, and aside from certain artists and a select few others, that claim is largely pure horse pucky. Next to huffing paint or glue, weed is the dumbest high on the planet. It never ceases to amaze me how weed smokers are often overly enthralled with their own ideas, at least when they're stoned. But those same ideas, when examined by a somber mind, usually appear insipid. Yet again, there is about one percent of the smokers, who actually become more motivated and creative, but I was definitely not one of the one percenters.

On the other hand, there are some drugs which, I believe, have inspired creativity. Some people feel that the European renaissance is somewhat owing to

the spread of coffee beans from Ethiopia to Europe. Moreover, there have been some interesting LSD users. Rumor has it that the following folks may have done acid: Richard Feynman, Francis Crick, Kary Mullis, John C. Lilly, Bill Gates, and Steve Jobs. Counterbalancing this is the fact that LSD may induce a life long struggle with schizophrenia in some of its users. But by-in-large, the majority of acid heads like weed smokes, are fairly unproductive, and tend to be overly impressed with their ideas. When it's all said and done, whether you believe in God or four billion years of evolution, or both, it's hard to beat well functioning natural neurochemistry. For me, the most creative and mind expanding drug I ever did was methamphetamine. The few times that I did the drug, no one knew about its addictive potential; even so, I sensed that the drug could possibly be habit forming.

Try as I might, attempting to put Rosa out of my mind proved to be impossible. Where fear and logic dictated that I stay away from Esteban's area of the city, for some reason it seemed to have the opposite effect on my libido. Indeed, she was a hot sexy thing. Perchance, it was her beauty and erotic shape, or perhaps it was her pheromones, or maybe the

problem was too much testosterone. Nevertheless, the more I worried about the police investigating Knifeman's death, the more I wanted to go in search of Rosa. The second morning after the killing of Knifeman, the reverse psychological battle of 'fear versus Rosa' was over. With Rosa winning. With my map in hand, I limped to the hotel concierge's desk, to inquire about which of the subway trains could best transport me to Esteban's area on the far side of *Chapultepec Park*.

Exiting the train, I wandered around, until I finally recognized some landmarks, and after a few wrong turns, eventually I located Esteban's place. Carefully, I scouted-out the neighborhood, trying to determine if it was under some sort of police surveillance, but everything in the area looked like business as usual. My sole motivation for going there was to find Rosa, while at the same time avoiding Esteban and his merry band of knife wheedling men. Even though I was filled with apprehension, I knocked on Esteban's door. Whomever I encountered, my plan was to just get enough info to be able to locate Rosa, then get the hell out of there. Stepping-up on Esteban's small portico, I glanced down and saw the blood still darkly staining the

concrete. *The police probably saw this.* I knocked, and when no one answered, and I felt a small relief.

Leaving, I noticed dried dark blood also staining the sidewalk and driveway, leading to the alley behind the apartment, still I didn't walk back into the alley. *Maybe the body is still back there.* Wrongly, I assumed that the police were still periodically checking on the crime scene. The blood made me flash on the fight that night: the bodies tumbling out the door, smashing me to the concrete, the back of Knifeman's greasy hair, spotting the knife, missing my grip, the knife going into my leg, the rear naked choke, and Esteban's guys repeatedly stabbing Knifeman... cutting his throat, as they dragged him back into the alley. These scenes flashed over and over, like little video bombs, exploding in my head. It was like recalling the scenes in a horror movie... and was actually no big deal... just an increase in sweating, respiration and heart rate, yet no fear or depression... just weird little videos.

When the flashbacks ended, I sort of woke-up, finding myself standing in the driveway, with my heart pounding, but as mentioned, I felt fine. For me, flashbacks have never been that unpleasant. Whenever the flashbacks started, there was often a

point where I could have stopped them, but I voluntarily chose not to, and I'd just let them play-out. Most likely, it was the pleasure of the associated adrenaline. The minor hallucinated memories made me feel alive, and were riveting. After locating Esteban's place, I walked around the neighborhood, not really looking at things, as much as I was repeatedly recalling that fateful night, and not so much remembering the events as actually seeing them, in my mind's eye.

After an hour of strolling around the area, I still hadn't located Rosa, but with all the walking, hunger had begun to gnaw at my gut, ergo I headed back toward the Chinese carryout. The older asian cook, who'd been there the night I bought the cigarettes with Rosa, took my order. The sweaty little woman was lively, and kept smiling at me, and even winked once. *Is this older lady hitting on me?* She possessed a coy, near toothless, yet beautiful smile, and sported greasy hair which appeared as if it had been washed at least once a year. *Is her hair so greasy because she doesn't bathe, or because of the greasy air, in here.* Having placed my order, the woman went in the back. Coming out from the kitchen, she held a white paper carton, by its thin wire handle, containing my

order of fried rice. She placed it inside a small crisp brown paper sack, twice folded the top closed, and surprised me, when out of the blue, the hyperactive asian woman questioned me in English. *She must speak at least three languages.*

“Are you looking for Rosa? You like Rosa?” She asked this, while grinning, displaying her gums and missing teeth. *She’s a sweetheart.*

Smiling back, I said, “Of course I do. What man would not desire the beautiful sexy Rosa, with the face of an angel, and the hot sexy body of a she devil?”

We laughed and she said, “She like you, too. You go see her, Señor Joey. She told me your name is Gringo Joey.”

“That’s my name, alright... Gringo Joey” I smiled.

Oddly, the old cook smiled broadly and nodded, then said something that made me think that perhaps she was gay and had the hots for Rosa. “I think she is a hot little woman too; I would like to get in her pants myself, but Rosa likes men only.” *Damn, she’s bold!*

“I put a good word in for you, but I don’t know

how to find her. Do you?" I asked, completely dodging the cook's gay comment.

"Yes, I know. She works here. I her boss."

"Rosa works right here?" I asked, shocked at finding-out.

"Yes, you dumb gringo. Rosa no tell you? Ha..." She smiled good naturally, after calling me a 'dumb gringo.' *Good Lord! What luck!*

"Is she coming in here, today?" I asked.

"Late tonight, but she lives that way." The cook said, pointing to her left, as if her greasy finger would be adequate directions to find Rosa.

We both laughed because it was clear that we both liked Rosa. Although, the cook was missing half her teeth, her smile warmed my heart. How often I've encountered people in the United States, who judge the 'value' of a person by the quality of their teeth. If such judgement calls were of value, George Washington would have been considered worthless. As a young adult, he started having tooth trouble and endured numerous extractions. Throughout his entire life, the first president regularly suffered dental pain, until all his teeth were all gone. Throughout Washington's life, he used various full and partial

dentures that were made from various materials: human, cow, and horse teeth, ivory, a lead-tin alloy, a copper alloy, and a silver alloy.

“Hold on a second.” I said, fishing-out my handy dandy map, so she could hopefully pinpoint Rosa’s home for me.

With the cheap paper map opened and spread-out on the stained cracked white linoleum countertop, the cook spun it to suit her perspective, then with the long narrow greasy nail of her little finger, she pointed-out Rosa’s place, about six blocks east of the carry-out. Borrowing one of the cook’s pencils, laying next to cash register, I circled the spot. The cook took the pencil back and used it to copy Rosa’s apartment address onto a piece of paper, then mentioned that Rosa had no phone. In those days, only a small percentage of the population of MC had phones, which considered to be a luxury.

Repeatedly, I thanked the cook, gave her a generous tip, and armed with the address, the map, the folded brown bag, containing my small white paper carton of food, and a stout plastic spoon, I headed out the door. Plastic spoons are now smaller and markedly thinner, but considering the damage plastics are doing to our environment, that’s

probably a good thing.

“You tell Rosa, Mai say, tomorrow night come work, not tonight... tomorrow night. You know Rosa is jealous of my good looks.” The homely Asian woman joked, again showing off her gums and missing teeth, twirling her oily straight jet back hair, around her index finger, while she thrust out her chest, which resembled that of a thin twelve year old boy.

“Of course, no woman is as beautiful as you, Mai.” I joked in return heading out the door, in search of Rosa.

“How your leg, now?” The cook asked, pointing at my swollen, butterfly taped knee. *Rosa told her.*

“Okay.” I said, assuming the cook had been told, about my role in the killing of Knifeman. *Shit!*
Wonder if the police spoke with Mai?

Certainly, I could have just waited until the following night, and met Rosa at the carryout, but I liked the idea of seeing Rosa’s home, hoping that she lived alone, and that we might spend some time together. In addition, I didn’t care for the idea of having to go near Esteban’s group to contact Rosa. Knowing where she lived would allow me to avoid

that dilemma. Going near Esteban's apartment to see her, increased the risk of my becoming entangled in the police investigation.

Following the map, I walked the streets, eating my tasty fried rice, with the complimentary plastic spoon, which had looked a little dirty, so first. I just spit on it, and swiped it on my shirt tail. A lot of the smaller eateries in Mexico City fixed surprisingly delicious food. With so many little diners, each tried harder to put out a quality product, for a reasonable price. In those days, there were no Mexican mega corporations, like *McDonalds*, *KFC*, *Wendy's*, or *Burger King*, feeding the Mexican people massive amounts of unhealthy, yet addicting insipid fast food, which contains plenty of fat and corn syrup to clog billions of tiny arteries, and keep all those cardiac surgeons cutting away, as well as the pharmaceutical companies pressing-out and selling pills, and the doctors prescribing them.

High fructose corn syrup (HFCS) is a huge contributor to the overeating and concomitant weight gain of many Americans. With HFCS, whatever isn't quickly burned-up is converted by the body into fat. Moreover, it frequently causes the liver to release even more fat into the blood to contribute

to even more atherosclerotic plaque. High fructose corn syrup is cheap and extends the food's shelf life, and the hell with your health. It's cheap, tastes sweet, preserves the food, makes you fat, damages your health, thereby keeping the medical corporations and big Pharma in business. Your death is nothing compared to big profits. Fast food businesses even put HFCS in the buns and the sodas. Moreover, even the salads often contain sugar. Profitably, HFCS is addicting for many. In addition, HFCS is a big contributor to America's diabetes epidemic, and of course, excess weight is also well known to contribute to arthritis, and joint replacement surgeries. Both are money makers for Big Pharma, the drug stores, the doctors, and the hospitals.

Free enterprise works best, when there are lots of little businesses, not a few massive monopolistic ones. For some unknown reason, even the average brilliant republican can't seem to figure out that obvious fact. The republicans support the huge corporations. In Mobile, there are only two major types of drugstores, three main types of gas stations, two types of convenience stores, two types of large multi-product stores, four to six types of fast food

franchises, one electric company, one gas company, two main sporting goods stores, two types of bookstores, one water and sewage company, etc. There are still a tiny group of private entrepreneurs struggling to survive, but they are fast dying-out: a few thrift and consignment stores, women's apparel stores, antique stores, restaurants, bars, sex shops, strip clubs, barber and beauty shops, trophy shops, print shops, tattoo shops, and a few struggling gift shops. Competition and free-enterprise are quickly going the way of the Dodo Bird in America.

Five blocks from the Chinese carryout, I had disposed of the empty food carton in a rusty trash barrel, adjacent to a tobacco, candle, and religious products shop. Such shops in Mexico City were frequently involved with voodoo, and for a price, there was usually a practitioner, who could lift a curse, issue a curse, or cast a spell to bring you love, wealth, health, or long life. I recall being amazed at how many of the people believed in that Hocus Pocus. Voodoo was truly big in Mexico City. There's usually an inverse correlation between the prevalence of voodoo and the quality of education. The more ignorant the population, the more people seem to be into voodoo. In addition, the poorer, and

especially the less educated the country, the more prevalent religion. At least the poorest European countries seem to be the most religious. And need I mention the countries of the middle east? Many folks need a little mystique, a bit of serendipity, mixed in with boring unhappy day-to-day reality. Quite likely, that's why I frequently have unexpected hallucinations, the ole daily humdrum isn't exciting enough, or maybe my lack of sleep, causes the dreaming parts of my brain, to fire-off during the awake state. Maybe those visions would stop, if I just would just adopt some popular religion.

Oxymoronicly, those Mexicans I meant, who claimed to have been into voodoo, also claimed to be Catholic, without seeming to think that there was any conflict of interest. Oddly enough, neither did some of the Mexican Catholic priests. Such voodoo-religious stores sold things like: crosses, rosaries, pictures of Jesus and Mary, religious medals, holy water, amulets, charms, craved figures, candles, potions, herbs, oils, spirit charts, powders, books of spells, individualized handwritten spells, crystals, bibles, certain dried animal parts, etc. Basically, they sold lots of stuff which cost nothing to make, but could be sold at a substantial profit. Though voodoo

encompasses many things, most of it seemed to principally revolve around sex, love, revenge, and greed, each created by a small piece of gray matter.

While I meant several voodoo practitioners in MC, years later in Mobile, I also meant one. She was the mother of a murdered prostitute. The young prostitute had been savagely attacked by a psychopathic heroin dealer, who was the son of a wealthy Mobile attorney. The voodoo woman seemed like a good and fairly decent individual... maybe a little crazy, but she was far better than the attorney, or his murderous son. She was all about revenge, and she got her retribution, but not by magic.

Walking passed the Haitian voodoo shop, I spied my destination, slightly down a low hill and across the street, a poorly painted yellowish rundown six floor cinder block apartment building. I say poorly painted, because it was different shades of yellow, with the gray cinderblock occasionally showing through. Its most stand out trait was that it didn't stand perfectly vertical, but rather, it seemed to ever so slightly be canted-off to one side, which made me wonder if it might soon fall over. *I wonder how those people can sleep in that crooked building?* It was then, I remembered that the city was famous for having

remarkably strong and frequent earthquakes. In addition, the city has been built on a lake bed and sinks about three feet per year, so tilting buildings are the norm. Rosa's yellow building also had noticeable cracks through many of the concrete blocks. Later, in 1985, that building was probably leveled, when an 8.1 quake struck Mexico City.

Judging by the building's closely spaced small windows, the structure contained many tiny apartments, ergo the place looked similar to a prison, but not nearly as well built. The ground, surrounding the building, was just dirt with only a few scattered clumps of dry brown grass, and lots of highly active bare-foot laughing coffee colored kids. No adults were watching the kids. The happy children just monitored each other, and appeared to have little concern about their poverty.

Not one of them had a single toy, not even a deflated ball to kick. The little kids seemed to be playing tag, yet despite how dirty and dismal the area, they were all laughing uncontrollably. It's never ceases to amaze me how some people, usually kids, can be so joyful, yet live in stark poverty, much as did my twenty aforementioned black Mobile paperboys. For a few moments, I just stood and

enjoyed their laughter.

Rarely, if ever, does a small child have the loud self-centered laugh of a hubristic adult. Where a child's genuine laughter invites others to join-in, other egocentric forms of laughter are intentionally designed to clash with the flow of conversation, or to dominate, or belittle. Oddly, such self-centered people think their irritating laughter is socially acceptable, and indeed it is, among other rude uncultured peoples like themselves.

Once inside the apartment building, with my first inhalation, I noticed that the air was thick with the smells humanity: spicy greasy foods, baby diapers, urine, and moldy carpeting. My ears were picking-up the sounds of radios and record players, the buzzing of flies, crying babies, yelling kids, one angry screaming man, who was threatening someone about something involving money, etc. The halls were dimly lit, with light coming-in only from a narrow shatterproof glass window, impregnated with chicken wire, in the heavily painted brown steel doors, at either end of the hall. The once maroon carpet was threat bare to the point that the concrete was visible in spots along the length of its center. What remained of the carpet was damp and darkly stained; it was

undoubtedly, a pathogen's playground.

Mexico City didn't appear to be too worried about health regulations, nor about building codes. Earthquakes had probably taken care of most of the substandard structures, so what was left might have been considered to be safe, with perhaps the exception of Rosa's building. On the first floor hallway, propped-up against the walls, were a few overflowing brown paper trash bags, each trash bag was standing adjacent to an apartment door. Several of the bags had been torn-open, ergo the air was nearly unbreathable. It appeared the bags had been ripped-open, and their contents scattered in the hallway by an emaciated semi-threatening shot-haired medium sized silent but hyperactive brown mongrel, whose pointed ear tips had been rendered raw and hairless, by the swarming flies. The animal allowed saliva to drip from its' tongue, and was pacing up and down the hall, sniffing and licking at the various trash items. *Wonder if he has rabies?*

Most likely the omnipresent rats would soon be coming. Periodically, I'd see rats darting about in the city, but then all cities have rats. The mangy cur looked desperate, almost panicky, as if the dog sensed that something evil was about to arrive. *This*

nervous animal knows more than I do about this place.

The canine thankfully didn't acknowledge my presence, other than to give me one very brief warning flash of his unusually large teeth. *That crazy dog is all teeth, but he's only interested in the trash.*

Again, rabies crossed my mind, but then, I recalled the kids outside, and figured the dog was probably okay. Looking at the smelly first floor hallway, I realized that some people can adapt to almost anything. The first floor was social Darwinism at its best or worst, depending on whether you were considering the kids, or Mexico's corrupt politicians.

Millions of years of evolution had created a human specie, which could happily live in such an abomination. A disgrace created by yet another human subspecies, whose greed was so immense and sociopathic, that it happily produced poverty without the slightest remorse. The dog had also adapted, but not as happily, as had the kids. In an odd way, it's sort of like what the oil companies, and the coal companies, charging you for the privilege of buying their overpriced power, while they turn your earth into an anathema. Every year, I notice that Americans become more and more like the impoverished Mexicans of my youth, while certain

corporations become more and more wealthy. Major corporations are slowly, but steadily, bleeding the average American, but slowly enough, that people don't go into full blown revolt. Perhaps, America needs one, if for no other reason than to save the planet. What's killing a few rich folks, compared to their killing the entire planet? This is one of those situations where adhering to the letter of the law becomes an absurdity.

If change happens slowly enough, people tend not to feel the squeeze, or if they do, they adapt and are happy to let someone else do something about it. If every couple of days, your IQ were to drop by one-tenth of one percent, you probably wouldn't notice the change, but it wouldn't take long before you'd be a blithering moron. As the earth dies slowly, the public may bitch and moan a little, but ninety-nine percent of the citizens are apt to do nothing. Once I was told that for every one percent, which unemployment goes up, forty-thousand people die, because of issues relating to poverty.

The poor tend to commiserate with each other, yet gradually, they accept their fate. They may periodically grumble, but when the grouching dies down, then it's time for big corporate to once again

tighten the financial screws, another eighth of a turn. The systematic strangulation is done so gradually, that it's sort of like waiting for the preverbal teapot to boil, or like watching a glacier melt. Of course as of late, the latter factor has begun to markedly accelerate. The psychopathic CEOs and their board members are semi-bright people, but heavily fixated on their all consuming greed; so much so, that they overlook the fact, that they're bringing life on earth to an end. Like selfish spoiled little kids, they metaphorically never stop screaming, "Give me... give me... its mine... its mine. Mommy, I want it. I want money..."

This snail-paced greedy economic and ecological garroting of the world has happened so circumspectly, that for too many people, it appears almost static, particularly if you're upper or middle class, or you aren't suffering with some environmentally related health issue. The older the person, the more apt they are to see the change. They've got more memories to draw upon. The screw tightens with each loss of individual fiscal position, with each private independent business endeavor which fails, with each job that is suddenly fazed-out, with each fraction of a degree the earth's

temperature rises, with every little freedom which silently slips through our fingers, with each new drone which goes aloft to cut loose with a deadly hellfire missile, with each aquifer, which becomes too polluted to safely drink from, with each time the price of a household item inches slightly upward, with each new medicine which hits the market with its inflated price and adverse side effects, with each rate hike in your power bill, with each new homeless person we see with their little cardboard sign on the street corner (roughly 50,000 are vets), and you wonder how they ended up there, but you never stop to discuss their plight, because it's probably all involved with the drug and alcohol trade. The above things happen so slowly that they don't seem worth the effort needed to mount an effective protest, much less a viable offensive.

Perhaps, this gradual acceptance of social, legal, medical, environmental, and financial strangulation is the ultimate form of evolution, too pernicious to be overcome by a human gene mutation, and finally finishing off those pesky poor people and overly generous folks, while rewarding the psychopathic monsters of the planet, at least until the atmosphere is beyond help. The psychopaths apparently win,

because the vast majority of the world is too passive to fight back, and they're not smart enough to fully comprehend the fact that they're sliding down the greenhouse tube, to an inglorious end, perchance by hydrogen sulfide poisoning! If the below quote, from the Quran is true, about killing one person, what does that say about this slow killing of everyone?

If anyone kills a person it would be as if he killed all mankind.

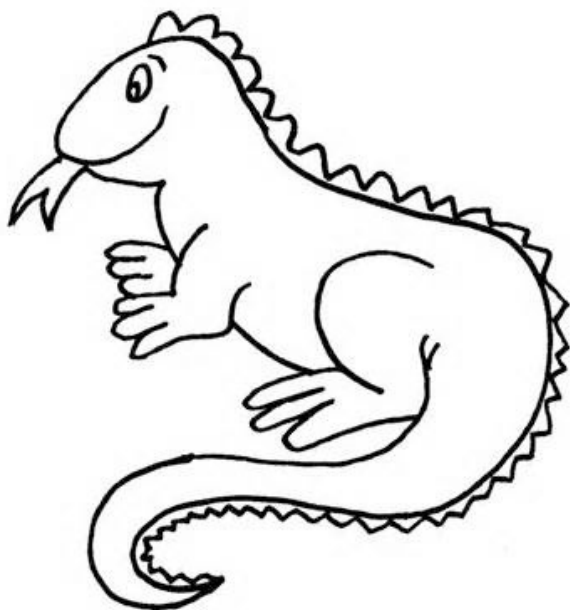
Surah 5:32

That's a nice quote but what does the Koran say if a few people gradually kill everyone? Then again, there are some few folks, who protest and fight back, like those crazy Greenpeace fanatics! If the atmosphere or the economy gets bad enough, some of America's retired special operators may decide to come out of retirement and eliminate the corporate heads and politicians, who are the fountainhead of all this insanity! The special operators form their own task force, their own type of Greenpeace, only it would be more like Redpeace, than Greenpeace. If that were to happen, no doubt the media will do all they can to cover that up or at least make them look like crazy radicals, rather than reasonable people

trying to save the earth; but by then, it would probably be too late to save earth, anyway. Still, why not try? Of course, such special operators can just be reabsorbed into a failing economy, work a job that doesn't really support him, much less honor him, while he struggles with his *PTSD*. The PTSD is a by product of the MIC's need to get rich.

Back then, in economically devastated Mexico, and as a child in poverty stricken Spain, a lot of poor folks, wore cheap molded plastic shoes. I recall thinking that such cheap shoes would never be sold as footwear in prosperous America. But now, we've got plastic 'Crocs,' and they are so 'popular.' But, even in southern Spain, and Mexico City, there were no homeless people, as you now see in most of America's towns and cities. The American homeless didn't really become so noticeable, until the later 1980s, now they are commonplace, nesting on corners, standing there just like the stop signs.

[OBJ]



THE NEON IGUANAS

The toothless greasy-headed cook, Mai had

indeed provided me accurate directions to Rosa's place. As stated, Rosa's apartment was on the second floor of that yellowish, slightly tilting building. Thankfully, I didn't have to ascend any higher in the precarious structure. The squalid first floor had come equipped with the jittery hyperactive garbage-hungry dog, quietly patrolling and feeding-off its' hallway. I didn't really want to go any higher into that worrisome slanted building, than was really necessary.

The second floor was a marked improvement over the first. It was cleaner, quieter, without the torn bags of smelly garbage, and minus a crazed, potentially rabies-carrying dog. I was more comfortable enclosed within the haphazard pile of logs in the jungle of *Chapultepec Park* in the dark, than I was in Rosa's crooked fractured building in the bright daylight. The tilting tenuous edifice had no elevator, only two rusty steel exterior staircases, one at either end of each dank hallway. On one side of the building, the steel stairs had broken in two, probably due to an earthquake, but people still used them, since the steel was still bolted to steel substructure of the building... broken but usable for an unknown time. The stairs just flexed and bounced

a bit, when the people walked on them. After knocking on door of apartment 202, and a few second delay, the metal door, which lacked a peephole, opened barely an inch. In the narrow opening was a stark male eyeball, the brown iris was surrounded by a white sclera, decorated with a scattering of red spiderwebbing blood vessels, clearly scrutinizing me, so I tried to look as nonthreatening as possible... relaxed. For a second, I wondered if the little cook had played a trick on me, and sent me to some psycho's apartment, just to get me out of the way, since she had the hots for Rosa. The bloodshot eye was surrounded by aged brown skin with countless fine and not-so-fine wrinkles. As the door opened a few more inches, I could see the eye belonged to a rough-looking, late forty-something year old, male. Then suddenly, the door opened a foot wide, and his head suddenly thrust out into the hallway, swiveling back and forth to look down the hallway in both directions. He was probably checking to make sure I was the only person in the hallway... a man, accustomed to dealing with trouble.

The first thing, I couldn't help but notice, was that his lower lip and chin had, at some time in the

past, suffered a fairly shocking wound, resulting in a thick vertical hypertrophic purplish scar. The rather jolting raised plum colored scar, indicated that his lower lip and chin had once been deeply cleaved in two, by a hatchet or machete! The weapon had hit almost dead center! *This guy is definitely dangerous!* Rosa would later tell me that he had been hit in the face by the edge of an open car door. Supposedly, the car was hurriedly backing-up, while the driver trying to escape gunfire. Rosa claimed that he was an innocent spectator, and not one fiber of my being believed her story about the car door. Most likely, he had been hit with a machete, and the situation involved his dealing hard drugs. The damaged mouth then moved, and asked me, who I was, and what I wanted. His cheeks were lined with deep furrows, decorated with conspicuous and abundant deep pock marks.

Initially, I wondered if the guy was an older boyfriend of Rosa's, or that perhaps Rosa was a hooker, and I was looking at one of her clients. In a way, the guy reminded me of the human version of the dog, I'd just seen down on the first floor, only the man was a lot more dangerous than the dog. He was definitely a long-time gangster. At that point, I was

unsure how to answer his question, without getting Rosa in trouble or pissing off that crazy looking man? I couldn't just leave, or he would certainly become suspicious. *What the hell should I say?* To formulate a decent lie, I first relaxed.

“Who are you and what do you want?” Scarface rudely asked, for the second time, narrowing his bloodshot eyes.

The trick to impromptu lying, while under pressure, is to ignore the pressure, appear to be happy, and maybe present a slight smile. You want to have complete faith that the words will come, and to find them just let your mind roam free, and wait for the lie to come bubbling-up, never doubting that it will arrive, for if you're a natural born liar, the lie will indeed always come, then for plausibility, mix it with a pinch of truth. Deliver it calmly at a moderate volume, and with a normal amount of eye contact. As it turned out, I skillfully did all those things, but got caught anyway.

“I'm Joey. The cook, Mai, at the Chinese restaurant, asked me to give a message to Rosa. Do I have the right apartment? Does Rosa live here, sir?” I asked. *I've nailed it.*

Completing the lie, a minor surge of pride swelled in my chest. There's nothing quite like taking pride in one's ability to lie, while wrongly assuming you've succeeded. My maternal Grandpa the attorney, and the gypsy kids in Spain had taught me the importance of lying. My dear Mother wasn't too bad, either, but she more or less simply bent the truth, rather than actually lying.

While matter-of-factly posing my lie, his bloodshot orbs tracked down and focused in on the butterflyed tape on my injured left knee. Then they tracked back-up to meet my eyes, as he pulled his scarred mouth to one side, and issued a lopsided smile.

He said, "One moment," and pulled his head back inside the door, but purposely continued to speak loud enough, so that I could hear him.

"It's some lying gringo looking for you, and I bet I know who he is, with that stupid bandage on his knee. You know what I told you about going to Esteban's, Rosa. There's too much trouble there! Now that gringo comes knocking on our door! He's probably just more trouble." The man with bloodshot eyes loudly proclaimed. *Oh crap, he knows I lied!*

The door was left partially open, after he'd walked back to somewhere inside. Feeling foolish, I realized that my contrivance about Mai had not fooled the man, whence my momentary bloom of pride quickly faded. At the same time, I realized that Rosa had spilled the beans, to the evil looking guy, about the death of Knifeman and my role in it. Two-seconds later, in a vivid display of color, Rosa stepped out and into the dank dingy hallway. She'd clearly just gotten out of the shower, and was wearing a fluffy bright light blue terrycloth bathrobe, which she seemed to absentmindedly allow to provocatively hang more than slightly open, once she was leaning-out into the hall. Her hair was wrapped-up in a large bright pink bath-towel. *Maybe she's just had sex with scarface!* With her beautiful locks hidden on the top of her head, the towel-wrap seemed to make her cheek-bones and expansive eyes pop.

Those perilously seductive dark purplish-brown lips, were slightly parted, with the tip of her light pink tongue lightly playing along her upper lip, then it switched to the lower lip. *God, she's hot!* She then slightly raised her eyebrows and seemed to gaze just past my eyes and directly into my thoughts, long enough so that I felt her, and she knew the moment I

did, for instinctively her eyes widened even more, and she knowingly smiled. Feeling a bit too obvious, I tore my gaze away from her all knowing eyes, back to feasting on her full sensuous lips, and then, the slightly open robe. Through the front of the robe I could see that her lean, but well developed, body was dressed in a pair of baggy white shorts and a very loose fitting lime green T-shirt, and from the movement and sway of that thin shirt, it was pointedly clear there was no bra, only firm well developed breasts.

For a few seconds, we hadn't said a word, just looked at each other, then she tucked her chin and pulled off the rosy towel from around her luxurious dark hair. Shaking her head, the heavy shining blue-black wavy tresses came cascading down around her chiseled features, causing her just-washed hair to release the smell of fresh coconut, and while I was indeed entranced, there was still the disturbing issue of the mysterious eerie looking man in her apartment, but we were both in our twenties and in that moment the chemistry took precedence. Beauty can often render wondrous effects in the mind of the beholder; sometimes, making you feel brave, when you should instead be thinking or probably leaving.

Feminine grace, and the promise of sex soon to come, can easily silence one's more cautious internal dialogue, leaving you swimming in the foolishness of pleasant sensations and expectations. Life's greatest expectations are all mediated from the greedy molecule, DNA. Often, I've foolishly marked my life's passage by moments of witnessing great beauty, where I've nearly been completely stymied, and simply enjoyed being cognitively paralyzed, much as I was that first day with Anna, the alluring Spanish prostitute, sitting nude on the side of her bed, right before my first sexual experience. Even though I'm now an old man beauty can still disarm me, and so life yet fascinates me.

I don't know of anyone: male, female, old, or young, who doesn't appreciate striking beauty. Of life's three most supreme gifts: beauty, love, and truth; love can be often change, and truth is not always welcome, but beauty, however you perceive it, is always a pure joy. I'm an easy read for a woman, who I find beautiful. Beauty is undoubtedly a blend of hard-wired genetics, and youthful experiences, and it can take my breath away.

Not knowing who the dangerous-looking guy was, I wasn't sure exactly how to proceed with the

conversation, for I certainly didn't want to cause Rosa any trouble, yet I did so want to be with her. Passion can be a demanding teacher, but it has frequently spelled the beginning or the end for many a person. After a brief quandary, and without another card up my sleeve, I again spoke to further carry-on my interaction with Rosa.

“Mai says that you...”

Rosa quickly stopped me from speaking by placing two fingertips on my lips, thereby solving my uncertainty. She then invited me to come inside, and introduced me to, who turned-out to be, her criminal dad, Armando. *Thank God, it's her dad! I'm sure glad she doesn't look like him!* I was pleased that she'd remembered my name. Before going back inside the apartment, she'd covertly closed-up her bathrobe.

Once inside, I noticed that there on the coffee table sat an opened almost empty crumpled pack of *Camels*, causing me to wonder if it was the same pack, which I'd tossed to Rosa two nights prior. Aside from the dirty ashtray sitting next to the cigarette pack, the small apartment looked impeccably clean. It was two bedrooms, one bath, and a living room-kitchen area, all crammed into about five hundred square feet. The pristinely kept tiny apartment,

situated in that filthy slightly canted building was like a smooth flawless seed in a piece of rotting fruit. Judging from his yellowed teeth and stained fingers, her father obviously smoked, a lot. Rosa didn't, at least not cigarettes. That night, I'd told Rosa to give the cigarettes to Esteban's guys. So perhaps, that pack of cigarettes was a small deceit. On the other hand, maybe Rosa was simply too upset that night to worry about handing-out the cigarettes to Esteban guys. But often, the devil is in the details. It's so easy to over-look incidentals in the spell of a gorgeous woman; especially, when lust is building like a tsunami.

Her shirtless dad, was covered in an assortment of poorly inked dark blue and black tattoos, without a drop of another color. *Those tattoos had to have been done in prison; still a few are pretty good.* His body was like a three ring black and blue circus. As with, the thick purplish scar that cleaved his chin and lip, the tattoos were difficult not to stare at. Some of the art looked like ancient Aztec designs: geometric birds, a snake, a jaguar, various monster faces with their tongues hanging out, probably one of which was the aforementioned Tonatiuh on the aforementioned sun stone. There was what appeared to be a dancing

warrior, with a feathered head-dress, and carrying a strange looking multi-bladed club. On the anterior side of one forearm was a dagger with a serpentine blade, and the snake head for the handle. On the other forearm were several series of numbers, and a smiling nude with large outwardly pointing breasts, reclining on her back with her hands clasped behind her head. Perchance it was a sad attempt at the famous La Maja Desnuda, painted by the famous Francisco Goya. These renderings were distributed around an extremely lean yet muscular body, except for his overly developed pot belly. *He probably drinks beer.* In addition to the cleaving scar through his chin and lower lip, his body possessed several other disturbing scars, which implied battle wounds, and stitches. Sadly, there appeared to be some old abscess scars on his forearms. *Armando is, or has been, a junkie, so maybe he's not as tough as he looks.* Indeed, he was a site to behold. *He's a far cry from Ward Cleaver, in 'Leave it to Beaver.'* These days, I look a little like Armando, but without the pot belly, the tattoos, the myriad of battle scars, the pock marks, the abscess scars, yet definitely without the resilient ability to withstand the cruelties of life, which Armando clearly endured.

It was difficult to imagine the adversities, which the man had no doubt sustained, but then being a person of considerable paranoia, I'd just as soon not stretch my imagination too far. Her dad wasn't a combat soldier, but all the same, he was a master of the thousand yard stare. There was more than a fair chance that he'd sustained more battle damage than the vast majority of combat vets. In the time that I dated Rosa, I would see him only a handful of times, and we never spoke more than a few seconds each time. Armando was extremely polite, and unexpectedly, he was a bit formal. Perhaps, he'd learned his social skills in prison, where polite communication is mandatory. He offered me a chair, and politely asked after my family. Carefully, I told him that both my parents were dead. My Dad had supposedly died in a military plane crash, and my Mother had drowned at the beach, with her sister, when they got pulled-out into deep water. Continuing the lie, I said that I only had an old distant aunt, but no longer knew of her whereabouts. That she was a drunk and had run-off with someone, she'd meant at the bar.

If you got arrested or kidnapped in Mexico, one's relatives are immediately contacted for blackmail,

both by the kidnappers, as well as by the police, so the name of the game is to quickly let everyone know, you have no money and all your relatives are all dead. When he asked where I lived, I said I lived in a small town on the border of Florida and Alabama, close to Mobile, which was almost true, so the lies would have been easy to expound upon, had I needed to, but I didn't. He'd heard of Florida, but not Alabama or Mobile.

Armando was plainly an aged street thug, but around his daughter, he behaved with a stilted attempt at polite dignity, but he didn't fool anyone. As the, now largely unremembered, chit-chat continued, I recall thinking that he was truly an evil man; the kind of man, that felt justified in raining hell down on the rest of humanity for his own gain. *Wonder how many people he's killed?* He'd have been an easy read as a poker player, and the type who'd been a dangerous, loser. The horrible wound to his lower jaw had probably left an even larger scar on his crippled psyche. It seemed to me, that he was a man, who needed killing, not by me, but I felt certain he had cruelly murdered his share of decent people, and some, if not many, were probably saintly... easy targets.

During our interactions, he always tried hard to appear to be a good and honest person, but it was a poor act; nevertheless, he made the effort, likely for his child's sake. If I hadn't been interested in Rosa, I would have avoided him, like the plague. Moreover, he would have refused to speak with me, had he run into me on the street, or he might have tried to mug me. While I knew that I couldn't have walked a mile in his shoes, still, I seriously disliked him. There are vast differences between gang members. Armando was most likely on the murderous end of the gang member spectrum. This made me wonder, if there wasn't a little bit of Armando in his daughter, Rosa.

Just off of the cramped little living room were two bedrooms, each barely big enough to accommodate a twin bed. Against one wall in the living room was a large bare metal sink, as you might have seen in a small garage. There was an attached three foot plywood countertop, surrounded by a little red and white checkerboard cloth skirt, probably hiding a shelf or two. On top the plywood counter was sitting an old two burner hot plate. The sink and burner served at their kitchen. The bathroom, with its little toilet, dinner plate sized sink, and tin-walled stall shower was situated in a tiny four by five foot

space, the walls and floor of which was covered in bright red tiles. The exterior wall of the bath had a frosted glass window, six inches wide and three feet tall, which didn't open. It was a good thing that Rosa and her dad were on the slim side. Cramped quarters were the norm for the poor in MC, and many years later, when visiting England, I would see this type of cramped living condition, in most of London's hotels... an island of cramped spaces.

Late the next year, while back in the United States, I'd be staying in a similar, but slightly worse living abode. The bathroom would be down the hall, and my room would be a tiny closet-like space, barely big enough for the twin bed. I'd live there simply to save money, even though I had a job and was fairly well-off. If my daughter ever finds a good man, marries, and moves out, I'll probably move back into a cheap little place. Big fancy houses hold little attraction for me. Small houses and apartments are easier to clean, and require less repair. So many people purchase big beautiful homes as a status symbol, but too frequently those homes only end-up representing more in property taxes, more maintenance and repairs, larger utility bills; more insurance costs, not to mention, that they contribute

more to the looming threat of global warming. Not wanting to get caught in another lie, I didn't mention how nice their apartment was, as I'd done with Esteban. Instead, after getting past the usual amenities, I finally came to the point, and humbly asked Armando for permission to take out his daughter.

"Sir, with your permission, I'd like to take Rosa out for the day." I formally asked. *Jesus, I never thought I'd be asking something like this.*

"Where?" He frowned and reflexively asked, without being friendly or unfriendly, but definitely serious.

Why haven't I prepared a good answer? I should have thought he'd ask that. My brain scrambled to stop thinking about my hotel bed, and I settled on a few short innocuous suggestions.

"To lunch, or maybe walk around *Chapultepec Park*, or perhaps a tour in the museum, or the zoo... possibly a movie? Wherever she wants to go is fine with me, sir. *To my bed.* Possibly you have an idea about where we could go. *My bed.* Certainly, I welcome your suggestions, sir." I fumbled.

Armando seemed genuinely pleased, and nodded

his consent. But then, he felt the need to add a few words, as his bloodshot eyes drilled me, and the nostrils of his narrow arched nose flared. His look could have melted steel, if he didn't also look somewhat ridiculous. Erroneously, I thought he was going to say something about when to bring her back, but instead he looked down and stared at the small adhesive-tape butterfly bandage on my left knee, then back at my face. It was clear that Rosa had told him about the fight with Knifeman, but he wisely didn't ask me about it. Professional criminals are often well acquainted with the fact that certain discussions can lead to legal liabilities. You just don't ask about someone's involvement in a crime.

“Esteban is a good man, but you know trouble sometimes follows him. When you're with my Rosa, stay away from him and his friends! You understand me? Rosa is a good girl. She doesn't need trouble, and I expect you to keep her safe, so do not disappoint me, and make sure that you stay away from Esteban's apartment with my Rosa!” He said that, while pointing directly at my injured knee.

“Yes, Esteban is a good man, but I certainly understand your concern, sir. You have my word. I'll do my best to protect your daughter, and stay away

from his apartment.” I stated, not realizing that I was lying.

It wasn’t hard to imagine what would happen to me, if something befell Rosa, while she was with me. Her dad wasn’t exactly the forgiving type of man, who casually played the banjo. He again looked down at my bandaged knee, and gave me a rather hard squinting nod, then spoke.

“I know you know a little bit about trouble, but I think I know a little more about trouble, and I don’t want Rosa near trouble, so make sure that you keep my child away from Esteban’s gang. Hear me?” He again insisted.

His repeated firm insistence that I not take Rosa to Esteban’s caused Rosa to give her dad a comical frown. To appease her scowl, her dad then asked if I had enough money to take Rosa out, and he definitely looked to be the antithesis of a generous man, so his offer caught me a bit off guard. He was not a well balanced man, and clearly disliked trying to behave in a civil fashion, but he was trying.

“No, but thank you, sir. I have a little money.” I responded.

For some reason, my reply seemed to disappoint

him. *He doesn't like that I have money, which is fast running out.* Maybe, my having money meant that I was more likely to take her away from him, one day. Many women often marry for money, especially poor women, like Rosa. Frequently, women can overlook a lot in a man, if he's got money. On the other hand, perhaps Armando was going to set me up in some criminal enterprise, selling something seriously illegal, and it wasn't hard to imagine what the possibilities might have been. Looking at him, he seemed to be the kind of guy that probably found murder, and dealing in hard narcotics, to be acceptable business practices.

There was a 'click' sound, as Rosa and I departed the apartment and headed down the dark narrow second floor hallway, toward the rusty exterior stairs. The sound was the door opening, so I turned and looked back. Armando had his head stuck out of the door, again. For a moment, he was silent, then he said, "Rosa's my life." He then pointed his index finger with his thumb pointed straight-up, not at her, but dead at me. Then, he snapped his thumb down toward the index finger, and instantly the index finger pointed upward. It was a simple gesture, as well as a potent threat. I nodded my understanding,

and Armando ducked back inside the apartment, closing the door a bit too firmly. Hoping that the first floor dog wasn't around. Outside, Rosa and I went in search of a taxi.

“My dad can be too serious sometimes... sorry.” Rosa murmured.

Having a beautiful young daughter, I now understand how Armando felt. The idea of my child dating is a constant concern. When I think about her going-out, various scenarios play through my paranoid mind. She's now twenty-one and has said she wants to date, but hasn't yet found the right man, even though she's beautiful in every way, or perhaps I should have said, ‘especially because’ she is beautiful, and in every way.

Before my child gets serious about a man, she is adamant that we all go to the health department for blood tests (HIV, HPV, Hepatitis, HSV1, HS2, gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, etc.), and then, I'll run a criminal background check. While these tests are not exactly romantic, they're a lot less complicated than winging it, yet winging it is usually the way folks operate. Ideally, I'd also like the guy to be assessed by an excellent psychiatrist, but that may be asking a bit too much; besides, she's a better judge

of character than I.

Rosa didn't want to go to the park; it was something about the sun darkening her flawless pale skin. For me, I do honestly see beauty in all skin shades; though as mentioned, I have a slight bias in favor of those erotic darker shades. On the other hand, many of the Mexicans, as well as many of the American blacks, strangely equate lighter skin with greater beauty. Plenty of light skinned blacks consider themselves to be more attractive than their darker skinned counterparts. Different strokes for different... Rosa picked the movie.

We arrived barely in time for the afternoon matinee. In my opinion, the movie really sucked. It was about the Jews, who had been persecuted in 16th century Mexico. Every culture has had its turn at laying waste to the Jews, or some other religion, culture, or racial group. The Jews have often been the human punching bags for the world. I've frequently wondered why? Possibly, its that nobody likes a smart ass, and by-in-large, the Jews do seem to be a highly intelligent group of people, but some people say the reason is their tendency to be greedy, that their greed supersedes their love for humanity. That's probably true of those Jews, known as

Zionists.

Indeed, I'd meant some Jews, who were overly fascinated by money, but also some, who were just the opposite. Though there can be some truth in making generalities about religions, cultures, races, or nationalities, it can be a dangerously tricky proposition, and certainly a waste of time. On the other hand, I do wonder if the Zionists haven't begun to become like those, who once persecuted them. What the Zionists have done to the Palestinian peoples, in the name of retribution against Hamas, is probably nothing short of mass murder, if not close to genocide. Of course, the Zionists have their side to the argument, but then so did Hitler have his, against the Jews. Apparently, neither the Arabs, nor the Jews, are smart enough to find a lasting way to peace.

Hitler had once applied to attend the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, but he was rejected, supposedly because the academy didn't want another landscape artist. His work wasn't too bad, but nothing great. Hitler may have convinced himself that the panel members, who had rejected his application were Jews, and he mentions this in his book, and that might have been when he developed

his hatred of Jews. However, the theory, which may hold the most water, is that in Germany there were always anti-Semitic feelings, and after Germany was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles to end of WWI, those feelings began to fester.

Hitler may have felt that the Jews were instrumental in the factory revolts, during WWI. These were the factories which manufactured the critical arms and munitions, and therefore it was assumed that the Jews had been instrumental in Germany losing the first world war. Afterwards, Germans faced marked economic hardship, and they needed to blame someone, for being poor and humiliated, and for having had to sign the treaty. So, they blamed the rich influential Jewish community.

For Adolph it was a no brainer. Get rid of the Jews and you get to keep their great wealth and their factories, and in the process, Hitler got a scapegoat to save face for WWI. So perhaps the holocaust was a combination of things: major religious differences, anger and embarrassment over the loss of WWI, poverty, and Hitler's selfish, sadistic, financially greedy gray matter got to fire-off. With all those Jewish factories, and hordes of wealth, he was better able to better finance and prepare for WWII.

<http://www.israelwhat.com/2011/04/11/jews-are-like-nazis-claims-popular-academic/>

But now days, haven't the poor Palestinians gotten the worst of it? Haven't they sustained far more punishment than what they deserve? They've become like the Jews, who were persecuted by Nazi Germany, and now the Zionist Jews have become a bit like Hitler's SS. To the Jews, the Palestinians probably seem like animals, much like Hitler described the Jews, as being rats. It seems that no matter how much the Jews punish the Palestinians, the Palestinians just won't leave, and just keep attacking, one suicide bomber after another. Whatever happened to mercy and love? Not only do the Jews over kill in their retaliation, but they certainly make the Palestinians live in abysmal, often unsanitary, conditions.

Perchance, Hitler may have eliminated the best natured most caring of the Jews, the: kinder, gentler, more passive, and merciful Jews. Whereas those who fled, may have been more worldly wise, more survival oriented, and because of certain behavioral traits, more apt to understand the true nature of

what Hitler had in mind for them. They would also be those, who'd be more likely to want to ascend into positions of power, i.e., the Zionists. Since those Jews, who fled Germany may not have been as naive, they were perhaps better equipped to understand Hitler's intentions. A psychopath is better equipped to recognize a kindred spirit. Moreover, evil has a way of creating kindred spirits. Consequently, people sometimes evolve to become like their enemy. Who is most likely to recognize evil and flee, a good person, or an evil kindred spirit? This is certainly not to say that all the Jews, who fled Nazi Germany were evil, but perhaps there was a higher percentage of malevolence among those who fled, compared to those who remained and were killed in the camps. Hitler killed more than half the Jews on earth. A Jew is a person, who belongs to Judaism, a religion as is Christianity, or Islam. Zionism is a movement, an ideology, for the development and protection of a Jewish nation, but as it is currently being pursued, it is also devoted to destroying Palestine. Of course, the Zionists will say it's necessary.

But it is true, practically every Palestinian, whom I've ever meant has wanted to kill every Zionist on the planet. So, we have the heartless Jews, dealing

out tremendous amounts of revenge, against massive numbers of murderous fanatics, with both sides killing way too many innocents. The Israeli gunships kill indiscriminately, and the Palestinian suicide bombers, send ball bearings through the bodies of too many innocent Jews. Plus, there's the Hamas with its' crappy rockets. The extremists on both sides are irrefutable criminals. Such people on both sides should probably be tried just outside The Hague, in the United Nations' Court. I wonder what might happen, if the leaders on both sides just kept getting locked away, with life long prison sentences, for the war crimes committed by their respective peoples?

On the other hand, maybe it's best if the Jews and the Arabs just go ahead and fight it out, and get it over with, until one side no longer exists! At this point, the Palestinians are barely hanging on. I for one, am sick of the constant idiocy, and I'm also sick of supposedly intelligent people, who are obviously too dumb to figure out a way to peace, frontal lobes which can't find a solution to their cruel impulses, banging around in their primitive limbic structures. The Zionists will never respect Islam, nor will any of the extreme Islamists respect the Jews.

No doubt this seems like a fairly simplistic

assessment of things, since I'm overlooking the massive historical aspects of the lengthy complicated scenario, but when it's all said and done, it's a matter of intelligent pieces of gray matter, being unable to deal with the more emotional parts of their brains. If you keep on doing what you've always done, and you keep being the person you've always been, you'll never get anywhere. The Jews and the Arabs just keep on keeping on, and both are apparently smart enough to come-up with a viable solution. Some folks in those two groups must relish the conflict, the maiming, the killing, and they labor diligently, to preserve the mayhem, propagandizing all those they encounter.

By-the-way, the death toll ratio in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict pretty well ends the argument about who's the evil one... 192 to 1, dead Palestinians to dead Jews. Sure the Jews claim they 'try' not to kill civilians, whereas the Arabs openly kill civilians. Perhaps, the Palestinians feel justified in doing so, because of the above ratio, and because martyrs are rewarded with a free ride to paradise, and if the martyr is a male, then there are lots of virgins to presumably have sex with (Although in one recently discovered ancient text of the Koran, the

virgins have been translated to mean ‘raisins,’ which makes no sense to me, but no religion really does.). Nonetheless, somehow the Hitlerian-like Zionists still kill many more civilians, even though they’re supposedly ‘not trying.’ The Jews have God, the Muslims have Allah... it’s the Torah versus The Quran... let’s kill people and stimulate that *Septal Nucleus* to the max, so that Jewish extremist-Arab extremist war drags on and on, and all the participating psychopaths, who are pulling the strings, stay orgasmic, whether it’s a vest-wearing suicide bomber taking-out a shop full of people, or an Israeli gunship taking-out a city block.

The movie Rosa had selected for us to watch was a real bummer. It involved the poor Jews of centuries past being mercilessly persecuted by hateful Catholic Mexicans. After Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabelle I of Castile had begun their Spanish inquisition of non-Catholics in the late 1400s, not to be out done, the Mexican government, who were all Catholics, launched their own inquisition. The Spanish inquisition was intended to better guarantee the orthodoxy of the unbelievers, but then it just sort of became an outlet for random acts of sadism, which included all the non-Catholics, i.e., the Jews, etc.

This is similar to how many muslims now speak of the infidels, those who doesn't believe in Islam.

The Mexican inquisition was something of an extension of Spain's, with both countries being controlled by the Catholic church, and after all, it was the Jews, who were partially to blame for savagely whipping, and then nailing-up Jesus, but so was Jesus a Jew. Even if it was thousands of years ago, that the Jews helped to kill the Jew Jesus, it was still a good enough reason to torture and kill, the then present day, Jews. Haters can always find a way to justify hating; the hard part is making others believe that such hate is legit. It's not too different from when President George Bush, Jr., ran around desperately trying to get a coalition of countries to attack Iraq, and trying to convince the citizens of the United States, that Iraq had those terrible weapons of mass destruction. That group of neurons, which are in fact the very essence of hate itself, in certain people welcome any excuse to go active and dump their stories of neurotransmitter, so the Zionists are likely praying for the next Palestinian suicide bomber to detonate, just so they can launch their gunships.

Since many of the innocent Jews in that movie were tortured and burned to death, I was glad when

the film ended. Often, people don't care for anyone, who's belief runs contrary to their own. One reason why people of varying religions fail to get along could be that when a religion is interpreted by its fanatics, said religious interpretations provide the interpreter with an excuse for tremendous cruelty, and if the fanatics have the kind of gray matter, which enjoys violent aggression, they are always on the lookout for 'justifiable' outlets (targets), for inflicting death and destruction. Beliefs can be tricky like that. The big religions have something for every type of person, so the fanatical haters typically cherry-pick passages, which clearly allow them to kill and maim.

That way, they can feel great about making all those bombs and blowing-up the never ending supply of infidels, not to mention the thrill of getting to chop-off heads. It's probably why the Zionists love to butcher the Palestinians, and why radical Christians enjoy deploying airstrikes, cruise missiles, and drone strikes. That way, they not only get to enjoy the same neurotransmitter release in their aggressive little pieces of gray matter, but they make tons of money for the military industries and justify the intelligence agencies; all the while, collecting the substantial

spoils of war: free oil, countless billions in various world currencies from the national treasuries, undisclosed amounts of gold from gold mines, tons of raw opium to be processed and shipped, etc.

Such groups get what they truly desire; it's just too bad, when the civilians get maimed or killed, or is it? Maybe you don't care; maybe, you belong to one of those groups that loves the war, regardless of its lack of justification. The odd thing is that each group knows that the great creator is on their side, and is guiding their destructive little pieces of gray matter, that feels so so so good when they fire-off, in response to inflicting lots of suffering and death. For many, these aggressive neurons, stimulate activity in the *Septal Nucleus* of the brain, where other people experience sexual arousal and orgasm, due to more normal things such as: beauty, erogenous touch, odors, taste, etc.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

List_of_Islamic_terrorist_attacks

How about those loving radical Spanish and Mexican Catholics and what they did to the early

Jews, or what of the aforementioned devoted Zionist, and what they're now doing to the Palestinians, virtually slaughtering them and making their lives a living hell? And don't forget, God is on their side, because they are God's chosen people. Right? Nazi Germany was mostly Catholic, as was Hitler, so God was on his side, too. Right? Or, how about that Christian group called the *KKK*, who are mostly Southern Baptists, and all the wonderful things they've done to the blacks and Jews in America? No doubt, God loved that, since he's obviously on their side. And, wasn't it largely those caring Christian Americans, who carried-out the near genocide on the Native Americans? But, who cares, those savages didn't worship Christ. Right? But, that was so long ago, it doesn't really count, or does it? God must have really hated the Native Americans, after all they were just sitting out there on the plains, minding their own business, and we needed their land for: railroads, cattle raising, gold and silver mines, settlements, resorts, farming, highways, test ranges for bombs and missiles, etc., and those stupid Indians were just communing with nature, and in our way. What's wrong with those idiots? Communing with nature... what were they thinking about? Besides, the American Indian has failed to make any

significant contribution to global warming, and therefore can't really be considered to be civilized.

It is nothing short of amazing how the radical fringe of any given religion can find justification for hatred in its teachings, where the other ninety-nine percent of the people of the same faith, who study the very same holy text, find only love and peace, and no excuse to hate and murder. And yet, it is this radical fringe, who pressures the entire populace to go along with them... just so their gray matter can feel better... their need to satisfy their need for aggression and greed. The sad thing is the violent fringe in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, does have justification for their violence in their religious texts. It really doesn't require a radical stretch of the imagination. Those books say the words clearly. It's just that most of the good people in those faiths tend to ignore them, and their leaders tend don't dwell on them and to preach more from other areas of the text. The amazing thing is how many people follow right along with all the hate and killing, buying right into the evil propaganda. For me, it's absolutely shocking how some muslims manage to persuade various young people to strap on a suicide vest and martyr themselves. You've got to really enjoy the fact

that you're coercing kids to kill themselves, to further your cause, and to give the kids a one way ticket to paradise. Of course, the creator of the universe loves the fact that they're killing themselves, to further the cause of violent Islam! It's hard to imagine a God, who supposedly created everyone, rewards those people with paradise for killing those people who have failed to believe. It's even harder to fathom that the followers believe such things.

Those comprising this extreme fringe, are usually sociopaths, which have a way of creating even more radical fringe. Their behavior causes their adversary in another religion to create more fringe... fringe making fringe... evil creating evil, just like Hitler may have created a few sociopathic clones of himself in today's Israel, just like how those fringe suicide bombers have created more fringe Jews, just like the ever aggressive hawks in the US government and military, create more terrorists in the Arab worlds... etc... *ad infinitum*. Hate is viral! It's all a matter of stimulating the requisite 'murderous' pieces of gray matter.

Dreamers prefer to believe that murderers are eventually punished. Nothing is further from the

truth; especially, when they kill in mass, to the sound of a bugle, and have God's eternal blessing.

What It's All About by WA Morey

The problem may be that it is the various pseudo-religious fringe, who are making everyone else's lives miserable. Look at how many muslims are into oppressing the fairer sex, in the name of Allah. Maybe we need a World Peace Conference, where the members of these radical groups can be identified, then somehow rendered powerless. Perchance, these psychopaths, be they homeless beggars or rulers of nations, could be rounded-up and put on an island together, where they might fight it out... till they're all dead. No doubt they'd be orgasmic over that situation, and of course God would be with each of them, for apparently there is nothing which God loves more than lots of killing, and watching people burn forever in hell. Each religion might cease to exist without faith, without the members giving-up some of their reasoning.

...once surrendering his reason, [a man] has no remaining guard against absurdities the most

monstrous, and like a ship without a rudder, is the sport of every wind. With such persons, gullibility which they call faith, takes the helm from the hand of reason, and the mind becomes a wreck...

Letter to James Smith discussing Jefferson's hate of the doctrine of the Christian trinity, Dec. 8th 1822, *Letters of Thomas Jefferson*, by Thomas Jefferson

Different strokes for different folks, and psychopaths are certainly different folks, with some seriously different kinds of bloody strokes. The people on the fringe love their religion more than anyone, since for them it provides the requisite excuse to act upon their dark desires, to hate, and not only without guilt (which they don't have anyway), but with a sense of accomplishment, whether its simply griping about their target or killing and torturing them; for in their mind, all their heinous deeds are God's will! This behaviorism also applies to many corporate heads who: cause global warming, fail to create medical cures, pedal bad medicines, create poverty, pollute the planet, etc.

This is why it's not a good idea to let any religion become synonymous with government, just look at Iran. That's just one excellent reason why there needs

to be a clear separation between church and state. Just take a look at the situation between India and Pakistan... Hindu versus Muslim, and both of them are nuclear powers, and each country with more than its share of religious fanatics! Those two countries probably constitute the hottest spot on earth; the place most likely for a nuclear war to fire-up.

The Republican party, also known as the party of war, and certainly the party of choice for the military industrial complex, may now be the home of most of America's psychopaths. When a religion takes over a government, eventually its radical fringe tries to ascend to the top, and take control, simply because no one likes control more than a psychopath. Those folks have more than their share of aggressive pieces of gray matter. Whether it's floggings, shootings, beatings, bombings, torturing, beheadings, etc., it gets them off, and I don't mean the hook. Idi Amin equivalents exist even in polite society. They're like the Hollywood zombies, only they're not as stupid.

Sitting in the theater with Rosa, I couldn't wait for the depressing yet historically accurate movie to end. The movie about the Mexican inquisition was marked by major periods of boredom, highlighted with gloomy scenes of purgatory. Surprisingly, Rosa

absolutely loved it! Walking out of the theater, she let me know that she was a devout Catholic, and felt that the Jews deserved what they had gotten in the inquisition, especially considering how they had mistreated Jesus... getting him beaten and crucified, not respecting that he was the son of God, etc. Her pieces of aggressive gray matter were in overdrive, inspired by the gore. *Is she nuts? Well, her dad sure is.*

<http://www.jta.org/2014/07/15/news-opinion/israel-middle-east/palestinian-deaths-vs-israeli-deaths-1>

Her hate, as inflamed by the movie, seemed palpable. Some things are far too slow to change, i.e., religious/cultural born hate. As a young man, witnessing Rosa's blatant prejudice against the Jews was nothing short of astounding, and contrasted strongly with the rest of her charming personality, not to mention, her intriguing femininity. On the other hand, considering her father's nature, and the minor fact that she was Esteban's gang groupie, the hate for Jews wasn't too surprising. She reminded me

of my dear Grandma, who was so sweet to most whites, yet disdainful of virtually every black, regardless of how good they were.

As the months passed, I realized that Rosa, besides Jews, also discriminated against darker skinned Mexicans, especially if a person appeared to possess black or Indian characteristics. She thought them slow and ugly. So early on, I came to realize that there would be no falling in love with Rosa; notwithstanding, she was an excellent candidate for copulation. In that respect, I was more concerned with stimulation of my own *Septal Nucleus*, than with any moral aspects of my involvement with Rosa. The male sex drive is poorly connected with the parts of the brain, which representing things such as morality and logic, for if said drive was involved with such things, unbridled sex would be a virtue and boring. Every now and then, I felt like making a little pitch for the Jews or people with more pigment, but I didn't want to spoil my chances for sex with the beauty. Besides, what was the likelihood that I could possibly change Rosa's mind? So, I just tolerated her religious and racial bigotry, and enjoyed my *Septal Nucleus*. That's probably exactly what my maternal Grandpa had done, only he ended-up getting

Grandma pregnant, and so he'd married her in August of 1924... a good man, who got saddled with a bigoted woman; but then, what in life is ideal? Bernice, the aforementioned family maid, had worked for Grandpa, cleaning his law office, before he meant my Grandma, and had helped Grandpa to prepare for his much needed August wedding. Coincidentally, Bernice had been born the same month, but of course years prior.

“Dat wedding was de day after my birthday. Yo Grandpa looked so handsome. He was all smiles dat day. He and them other Masons was all dressed-up... look'n so fine in them black tuxedos, black bowties, and shiny black shoes. Yo Grandpa said they were all a bunch ah penguins. After de wedding, I helped serve the refreshments at the reception, at the garden center. Yo Aunt got drunk, puked, and fell off the porch. But yo Grandma, was the most beautiful thing I ever laid my eyes on. Oh my Lord, she was a sight to behold! Um, um, um.” Bernice smilingly told me.

My Mom was born in January of 1925. Do the math... impregnation vs. marriage. In a one page article about our family history, which my mother wrote, she would later claim that my Grandparents had been married earlier, in February of 1924, rather

than August. Given that Grandpa had been a State's Attorney, it might have been possible to quietly doctor the county and state records. Everything was paper then...no such thing as digital. Appearances and protocol were imperative, back then. Doctors had no dependable way to dependably assess the age of a fetus, or how premature or late a newborn arrived, and certainly there was no DNA to verify paternity. Back then, it was acceptable to have the sperm penetrate the ovum, prior to saying, 'I do.'

Years later, I came to realize how easy it was to change certain government documents, which were simply typed on paper, or scribbled by hand. Often there was only one or two extra copies, depending on whether one or two pieces of carbon paper had been used. Moreover, at times, all the copies were in the same file folder. There were no xerox machines, no electronic digital copies. One time, I entered a government building, asked the clerk for and was given a file. There were no cameras in the room, so when the clerk turned her back, I might have simply removed certain pages, folded and pocketed them, returned the file to the clerk, then I turned and walked out. I did that not for selfish reasons, but because it was the right thing to do. Had I been

caught, the punishment might have been severe, but that would only have happened if the clerk had turned around and seen me. What had been in the file was a lie, and designed to harm an innocent person. I'd tell you more, but sometimes it's best not to self-incriminate.

Because of my youthful obsession with beauty, and my marked sexual desire for Rosa, I was a moral traitor to the entire human race, or at least to the part that didn't love to hate. All of the Jews I had known (less than twenty) had been kind and hard-working folks. All but one were intelligent, and a couple were brilliant. The only mean one had been Ann Hamburger's dad, who owned the tourist store in Ocean City with the aforementioned huge swim-fins, but all the Jews I'd known were deadly serious about their money, with one exception.

After the movie, Rosa and I strolled along the sidewalk and talked. Since much of the movie had to do with religion, Rosa was preaching about Jesus, ergo I figured sex was definitely not in the offing. But then after we'd been walking for about ten minutes, her bitter tirade about the Jews abruptly ended. She then grabbed my arm, gazed longingly into my eyes, and beseechingly asked, "What should we do now,

Joey?” It was like a starting pistol had been fired. She might just as well have said, ‘Let’s have sex!’ The question was absurdly melodramatic, but I sure didn’t care.

“Let’s do something your dad might not care for.” I said, and wasting no time, I flagged a passing cab.

Taking a Mexican cab with a pretty girl, seemed to always involve the driver, becoming overly obsessive about his rear-view mirror. It was customary that the driver was entitled to be looking, as if it wasn’t a rather obvious invasion of privacy.

Once at my place, I was in the process of awkwardly apologizing for my messy room, but when I turned around, to suggest we test-out the bed, Rosa was already stripping off her clothes, and was handing me what looked to be expertly rolled fat joint from her pocketbook; no one rolled penners in Mexico; weed was too plentiful and cheap. *What a great woman!* Rosa was a bit of a talker, but when she stilled that lovely mouth, I quickly kissed those magnificent lips. Sex and whacky weed always go great together. For me, the only thing better than sex and weed was... sex, weed, and music. Rosa’s kush was a true surprise; it was treated with a powerful

hallucinogen. She mentioned, that sometimes people in Mexico, would add a little ground-up dried mushroom, they called, 'humito.' Most likely, it contained psilocybin, one of the world's three major hallucinogens. That night was my only real experience with a potent chemical hallucinogen, and I loved it. Never did I encounter 'ditch weed' in Mexico, only primo. Of course, what was primo then would probably be considered ditch weed, now.

Around three a.m., we smoked the last joint and got in the shower. Looking through the tall but narrow floor-to-ceiling shower window, the sparkling lights of the city glittered like millions of burning jewels on a background of undulating black velvet. Then briefly, the city lights seemed like the luminous eyes of giant creatures, dragons, dinosaurs, etc. They were fascinating, and as the large creatures appeared, none of them seemed threatening, since it was all obviously an entertaining hallucination. And while some psychologist and psychiatrists will try to tell you that you can't distinguish between a hallucination and reality, that's simply not always true... at least not in my case. Beautiful and weird hallucinations are a welcome break from reality.

I picked-up Rosa by the back of her lean smooth

muscular thighs, lifted her above my waist, and gently pressed her lovely curving back onto the cool black and white marble bathroom wall, which helped to support her weight, allowing me more energy to devote to our rhythmic joy. We were in full view from the jeweled city below, except we weren't, since the light was off in the bathroom. The brilliance from the city, shining through the narrow tall window, let me joyously gaze upon Rosa's perfect form and face. On wacky weed, her eyes seemed twice normal size and the tactile sensations created by her body as augmented by the psilocybin, were far beyond descriptive words.

The drugs coupled with the black and white marble created a peculiarly appealing psychedelic perception of the beautiful young woman. Her wet shimmering white skin dramatically stood out against the black marble, yet that same pale skin also seemed to blend into and become continuous with the white marble. Likewise her damp massive blue-black hair stood-out boldly against the white marble but seemed to disappear and blend into the black marble. Moreover, her dark lips and nipples seemed to glow slightly red, and contrasted exotically with her wet white skin. Her body heat was wonderful.

The drugs also made her eyes seductively stand out, and convey a form of communication which had formerly been unknown to me. In an odd way, Rosa had become a part of the wall, so it was a lot like I was screwing an extremely sexy living human wall, if not the entire hotel, and then the perception seemed to include the entire city, as the lights and ground of the city seemed to undulate and move in time with our sex... waves of movement created by our bodies were moving out through the city. And so, Mexico City became a giant sensuous extension of our sex.

The brilliant radiant jewels created by the lights of the buildings, the neon signs, and cars seemed to compose parts of our tactile sensations. In an odd, but seemingly real way, Rosa and I had become part of the city. Words will always fail to adequately describe a great hallucination, for understanding the written and spoken word is only a small portion of the brain, Wernicke's Area, whereas the actual visual, auditory, and tactile aspects of the hallucination involve much larger amounts of the cortex, and limbic brain. It's that way for almost everything we experience; words must always fall short, compared to the experience; especially, if the writer lacks

sufficient writing skills, as I obviously do.

That spellbinding experience, with the boldly gorgeous Rosa blending in and contrasting with the white and black marble wall, and the undulating bejeweled city below, was captivating in that it also integrated with my tactile sensations. It was as though I could actually feel the entire city. As if that wasn't enough, then along came a dozen or so glowing pastel neon-glowing iguanas, and some other smaller Gecko-like lizards, all with large knowing eyes, which I knew I'd seen that first night in Mexico, when I was dreaming in my car, in Monterey. The animals felt like old friends and crawled around inside the bathroom, and over the outside of window and hotel. Strangely, Rosa saw them, too. Some of the iguanas pointedly starred, as if interested in watching Rosa and I having sex.

Listening to the melodic sounds of a Mexican beauty, while having mad tripping sex, was a major event. It's amazing how her vocalizations heightened and hastened my delight! The sounds of a woman's moans and screams indisputably stimulate the male's *Septal Nucleus*, via the eight cranial nerves; perhaps, not unlike how a baby's cry can make a woman lactate. That night, Rosa's beauty and voice would

make me come, time and time again.

There were countless vocal references to God, so I wondered if perchance the morbid religious movie, which I had wrongly assumed had to have been a turn-off for her, had actually been an aphrodisiac of sorts. It may well be that it's not just certain men who are sexually aroused by hate and violence. It appeared that the burning of the Jews had ignited her passion. If that were true, it was probably the only good thing that ever came out of the nightmarish Mexican inquisition. Rosa's hate and love were apparently tightly linked. Some people have freaky central wiring. Since the hippocampi (memory banks) of the brain feed directly into the *Septal Nucleus*, it's not surprising that various memories and emotions can produce sexual arousal.

Most opposing emotions are made of cells which are heavily inculcated, where the cells representing each emotion release a chemical (an inhibitory neurotransmitter) on the cells of the opposing emotion, to turn it off. So generally you can't feel happy and sad at the same time, or hate and love simultaneously, and you can't feel sexual arousal and indifference at the same time. This may be partly the reason that the idea of 'reverse psychologically' came

about. Even with hysterical laughing and crying, each must momentarily stop before the other actually begins. Piety and sexual arousal may be similar in that respect, so that religion inhibits sex, so that the sexual parts of the brain increase their stores of neurochemicals (neurotransmitters), setting-up the brain for sexual desire.

The devoutly religious girl I had dated at Ocean City, Ann Hamburger, was a horny Jewess, and Anna had been a horny Spanish Catholic prostitute. Just little pieces of gray matter doing their thing. Part of religious devotion must be the suppression of portions of the sexual *Septal Nucleus*. Rosa was the fourth devoutly religious girl I'd known. Maybe the rabbis and priests cast some spell over their flocks to make them horny. In truth, I'm nearly positive that is the case, but not an actual mysterious magical spell; nevertheless, it's real but mostly subconscious.

Anna, the aforementioned Spanish prostitute of my childhood, was a first rate Catholic, and Lord knows she was a major female pervert, if ever there was one. And, from first hand experience I know she was into kids. Apparently, nothing got her hot, like having sex with a twelve year old child, which I was when she seduced me. How well I remember that

there was a large cross above Anna's bed, and a picture of Jesus on a wall adjacent to the bed, in which I lost my virginity, and then, regularly visited every weekend. Like Rosa, Anna loathed the Jews, and both were serious Catholics. Rosa christened the bed with an abundance of her own holy water. Years later, research revealed that women, who squirt during orgasm, possess a primitive male-like prostate gland, which produces the ejaculated fluid, just minus the sperm. But then, some French researchers studied the mysterious phenomenon using ultrasound scans, to discover that the ejaculate originated in the woman's bladder - and is made up mostly of urine. The team, led by Samuel Salama, a gynecologist in Le Chesnay, worked with seven healthy women who reported the recurrent and massive fluid emission, when sexually stimulated. It's not uncommon for women to experience a little bit of milky white fluid leaking from their urethra at the point of climax, but the practice of squirting enough liquid to fill a glass is rare. The milky white fluid may come from the Skene glands, which empty into the urethra. The fluid contains PSA, prostatic-specific antigen, usually found in the male's prostate.

Most of the next day was spent between, the

shower, the bed, and quickly ducking out to grab food and drink. She liked for me to talk “angry English,” during sex. Having figured-out her sexual-religious thing, I’d thrown in a few sacrilegious comments, during sex. Again, it’s all just a matter of neuronal wiring. Thank God or thank evolution, that the *Septal Nucleus* has very few connections with the logical parts of our brains. How boring sex would be, if sexual arousal was just one more intellectual endeavor. The sex and kush completely blocked the pain in my knee and ribs. My bet is that there’s really something to be said for the medical use of weed as a pain attenuator. Stoned, my knee didn’t hurt, even when my weight was on the wound, during the missionary position. Still, the pain attenuation could have been owing to the sex, or the hallucinogen.

There are vast differences in women with regard to their sexual proclivities, just as there are with men, but regardless of the differences, the majority of females seem to be more apt to equate sex with love. The sexual and loving parts of their gray matter share common pieces of nervous tissue, one stimulating the other. Like most guys, I’ve never equated the two: sex and love. For me, they’re sort of like a clown fish and an orange creamsicle. Sure

they're both orange and white, but put each in a blender with your smoothie and they don't taste vaguely similar. For me, sex is a great sensual thing which feels absolutely terrific, but has little, if anything, to do with love. Perhaps, my gray mush is simply ill-configured.

Its possible, that the only four people, I've loved have been my daughter, my Mom and Dad, and Evangeline. There are many others I have been fond of, or thought I loved them for a while, especially Margo and Anna. No doubt the reality of love is different for each person, and thank goodness we are all so wonderfully different. After all, without all those differences, the racists and bigots might not have anything with which to entertain themselves.

Rosa was somewhat self-deluded; in that, her love was extremely carnal and possessed strange religious triggers; nevertheless, she considered our sex to be love; provided she was being honest. Oxytocin can be so deceiving. Why that was awkward was that she insisted, that I was in love with her, too, and I wasn't. Perhaps, she just wanted me to believe that she loved me, so I'd take her out of Mexico. Regardless of the sincerity of the relationship, being with Rosa was great sexual

entertainment. Loving her would require that I was okay with her hatred of certain groups of people. It's hard to see how a person can judge all people of a particular culture or race. There are just too many people that have to have something to hate, be it: race, culture, religion, economic group, phenotype, age, sexual preference, intelligence, nationality, educational level, etc. Some people just have to have someone to take-out their insecurities on, or somebody, who allows them to unleash their large numbers of hate-generating neurons.

The next afternoon, I had three of the original twelve condoms left. It was a personal record for me, and at age twenty-six. I was ten years past what is generally considered the male's sexual peak. Perchance, I was driven by the psychedelic whacky weed, or maybe it was just Rosa's animal magnetism. But even though drugs enhance the sexual experience, they put a little lie into each encounter, and albeit weed does markedly enhance sex, in subtle ways it places a slight illegitimate rift into the relationship, for when stoned, neither person is their natural biochemical self. Of course, the same goes for alcohol. I've heard of couples, who've been together for many years, but only have sex, if they've downed

a few beers or drinks. Rarely do serious relationships last, between dopers. I've known but two couples, who were regular marijuana users that went the distance. One older couple, who you might say are the original hippies, still appear to be madly in love, yet they're the only such genuine couple that I know of. They run a small hippie shop in southeastern Alabama, and are outstanding people. But, they are a rarity. Other hippie couples, I've known, who've remained together, seem miserable to me. Maybe they don't want to go through the stress of the break-up or divorce, or they stay together for their kids' sake. It never ceases to amaze me how many folks equate pity with love. In that, the person who is pitied, often wrongly assumes that the pity they are receiving is love; it's better than admitting that they are someone to be pitied. Of course that too may simply be a product of evolution. Evolution is primarily concerned with survival, and if you can get someone to take care of you, even if it's out of pity, you are more apt to survive; hence, the acquisition of pity may be a positive behaviorism. For that matter, every emotion has its origin in evolution.

The next day, while we were eating some 'tres leche' cake, and sipping some atomic powered coffee

at a side walk bistro, I asked Rosa where she had gotten the amazing whacky weed. Rosa's weed was the best I'd ever had, and I'd smoked many varieties, including some other treated brands that had made me hallucinate, but none that took you to mind-blowing places as that Rosa's psychedelic kush had, and so I definitely wanted to try it again. Rosa said that she had received it as a gift.

“Esteban gave Mai and me a few joints, while I was working at the take-out the other night. He's always trading joints for food, and Mai loves marijuana, almost as much as I do. It makes her horny, then she can't keep her hands off me. In many stores, marijuana is a better currency than the crappy peso, but nothing is as good as the American dollar. The weed also makes Mai a better cook. It makes her turn-up the music real loud, then she sometimes tries to screw some young guy, who's come in the store. Yes, the crazy woman men and women. Without weed, Mai acts like sex is stupid and unimportant. I let her eat my pussy once. That was a big mistake, because now she won't leave me alone. It felt good, but women aren't for me; I like dick. Lesbians always think that all women are part lesbian. I think it true for about one out of every ten girls.”

Remembering her dad's warning, about not taking Rosa to Esteban's apartment, I decided to not press the issue, about trying to get more of the way-out wacky weed. Her dad was definitely a person, I didn't want to get crosswise with. But with that very thought, Rosa spoke up to the contrary.

"Yes...That herb was crazy good; wasn't it? Let's go get a little more, and fuck some more, Joey." She smiled this happy reply, and so she was impossible to turn down.

"What about what your dad said? You know... about not going around Esteban's place, and avoiding trouble. Going to see him, might be a big mistake, and I sure don't want your dad pissed at me. He's not exactly an innocent choirboy." I cautioned.

"You think I'd tell my dad? No chance... He'd kill you! Besides my dad has made a lot more mistakes than most people... more than you and me, and another few people, all added together. I know you can tell from all the scars and bad tattoos that he's been to prison. You were good with him, and he was good with you, considering he hates all Americans. Don't be worried about my dad, Joey. I can handle him." *I sure as hell hope so.*

I didn't want Armando mad with me, but she just softly chuckled, and off we went to Esteban's apartment. Esteban was home, and to my surprise, seemed to be extremely happy to see me, thanking me repeatedly for having helped him in his fight with Knifeman. It seemed like he didn't expect me to come back. He expressed concern about my knee, and I asked him about his injured forearm, so he pulled off his bandage and showed me the wound; it appeared there were about thirty little knots of black gut running down the long incision. *The scar is going to look like a zipper has been installed in his forearm.* Even with Esteban's overdone gratitude, the last thing I wanted was credit for anything related to Knifeman's death. Knifeman's death was like a flaming bag of dog crap dropped on the porch of my soul. The more I tried to stomp it out, the worse it became.

For all I knew, Knifeman could have been a decent person, who had been trying to avenge the death of a good friend, whom Esteban and his gang had killed. But the night that I choked him out, I intuitively knew that was not the case. Even so, while Esteban seemed like a decent guy, the truth was I hardly knew him. For that matter, Esteban and his group might have been setting me up for the

murder of Knifeman; all-the-while, acting appreciative. Obviously, paranoia is a problem for me, hence taking people at face value is also. Fortunately, Esteban accurately read my discomfort, so he asked Rosa and me to step outside, away from the group. He first nodded his head, cleared his throat, then gently placed his right hand on my left shoulder and explained that Knifeman had been the owner of a truly evil reputation, and had been suspected of killing more than a few people, including one of Esteban's cousins. Knifeman was a ruthless heroin and cocaine dealer, and definitely known to have been a crafty killer.

Rosa immediately confirmed the truth of each of Esteban's comments. *Why didn't she tell me this, when we were alone together?* This confirmation by Rosa was clearly comforting, regardless of whether it was truthful, but by then, I was ninety-nine percent sure she was being honest. As it turned-out, both of them were reliable on this issue. Esteban's talk was helpful, since I didn't like to think that I had helped to kill a decent person. Unapologetically, Esteban went on to explain that he, made a living dealing drugs, mostly weed and hash, as well as small amounts of cocaine on special request, yet never heroin. He proudly

claimed that he was always fair and honest with those he did business. Back then, powdered cocaine was not considered to be as addictive as heroin, and to the best of my knowledge no one free based.

http://www.drugwarfacts.org/cms/Addictive_Properties#sthash.yAqFPblE.dpbs

In addition, Esteban and his crew made money, when hired for security purposes, by large dealers. The various dealers usually furnished guns, as well as cars, then collected them back, after the job was over. Most of Mexico City's drugs were transported from ports and other areas of Mexico to a tin warehouse in the black section, called Tepito. Soon, I would be well acquainted with the three men, who ran the drug trade inside Tepito, which furnished most of the city, and surrounding states.

Putting my paranoia on hold, I asked Esteban how the fight got started, the night that he and Knifeman happened to fall out the door on top of me. He said, Knifeman had boldly come to Esteban's apartment, calmly claiming that Esteban owed him money, which was in fact had been a real debt, but

which Esteban had paid-off, three weeks prior. Of course, Esteban had refused to pay a second time, explaining that he'd already paid the debt, and commented that Knifeman had evidently forgotten or was stoned. Playing for time and waiting for the best opportunity to strike, Knifeman smiled and pretended to accept Esteban's recollection, saying that he was sorry, and must have been stoned, when he received Esteban's payment, and had earnestly forgotten.

Knifeman's sham of memory loss about the loan payment was designed to placate Esteban and his men, getting them to drop their guard, and it seemed to work. Knifeman was known as an extremely fast runner, and of course had worn his new running shoes to facilitate his escape. While Esteban and Knifeman were talking, Esteban's gang had been busy smoking weed and flirting with the women, while playing some tunes on the record player, so when the low-key conversation about the supposed debt had first started, no one really paid Knifeman much attention. Once Knifeman appeared to have been satisfied with Esteban's comment, Esteban started to turn away, but barely realized that Knifeman had suddenly moved, and pulled a knife. Quickly turning

back around, to deflect the blade with his forearm, Esteban received the grievous wound. Because of the speed of his saving movement, Esteban continued spinning, falling back-first, right into Knifeman, and so they both tumbled through the screen door, which I was gallantly pulling open for Rosa. When Knifeman and Esteban first fell out the door, no one in the gang had noticed, and it was only my yelp, from being knifed in the knee, which had actually alerted Esteban's men, and that's when I applied the rear naked choke, around Knifeman's throat. If few seconds later, Esteban's guys came flying out the door, and began to attack Knifeman.

The apology about the memory loss was supposed to have given Knifeman enough time to stab Esteban, then make a dash for freedom, presumably back into the safety of his gang's territory. As stated, Knifeman was known to be an excellent sprinter, and could probably not have been easily caught by anyone in Esteban's crew, once he'd bolted out the screen door. His plan was like a beginner's chess move, designed to quickly kill the king, a fool's mate.

Esteban claimed that Knifeman was a ruthless violent thug, and jealous of Esteban's connection

with the drug lords of Tepito for the aforementioned security work. No drug lords trusted Knifeman, nor any of his gang. Esteban's men, though clearly a tough group of guys, were not into muggings, dealing hard drugs, extortion, break-ins, robbery, demanding protection money, or territorial disputes. Perchance, only in the world of gangs, would Esteban and his men be considered good guys. In my life, I've known bad people, who followed the letter of the law, and lawless people who were the best of folks. It had been Knifeman's intention to take over Esteban's aforementioned lucrative drug security jobs. Without Esteban, there probably wouldn't have been anyone in Esteban's gang, who could have continued running the drug security escorts, for the three drug lords of Tepito, so presumably Knifeman might have been able to step into the job. I wondered why Knifeman didn't use a gun, instead of the knife which he ended-up sticking in my leg.

Considering Knifeman's bad reputation getting the drug shipment security gig might have lead to other things, like stealing the drug shipments, they were supposed to be guarding. Most likely, Knifeman and his gang would have been slaughtered by Quinto, one of the three black kings of Tepito, whom

I was soon to meet. But, the drug lords preferred Esteban just because he was known to be trustworthy... yes, a trustworthy gang leader. There was no guarantee, that with Esteban's death, Knifeman's group would have gotten the job, and from what I'd later learn from the three kings of Tepito, they would probably have killed Knifeman.

Besides guarding drug shipments, and selling mostly non-addicting drugs, the majority of Esteban's gang also worked regular jobs: waiters, janitors, a couple of store clerks, delivery man for a law firm, a truck driver, a bouncer at a club, etc. While they were more than capable of violence, they weren't inherently violent, just guy's with more than their share of backbone, and since Mexico was dirt poor, money was always a concern. The gang possessed admirable traits: respectful of women and the elderly, and they were honest with each other. Gangs like people, often have their own personality, which can somewhat be reflective of the character of their leader. Back then, it was generally the case that the harder the drug, which the gang sold, the more ruthless the gang and their leader. On the other hand, as of late, the marijuana cartels have become dangerous, even though weed is a relatively harmless

drug. If you think the drug cartels are evil, just consider how much harm the pharmaceutical companies inflict with their longterm treatments, while not allowing any curative medicines to be created. If you doubt that statement, try to name three medical cures for any serious malady in the last twenty years. If you can't, then ask your doctor to try, and don't accept non-curative treatments. If your doctor can't name three cures, then raise a little hell, about that sad fact. And if the doctor tries to name the cure for hepatitis C don't accept it. That cure has been around for a long time. It just took far too many years for the *FDA* and *AMA* to allow its use in the United States. The reason for that is that Hep C was a money maker for the doctors, drug companies, and the hospitals. Again, demand that your doctor name actual cures, not longterm treatments. {For a discussion on how to cure diseases read the chapter entitled, *My Brain Wakes-Up*, located in book eight of this series.}

You might also consider the fact that the big pharmaceutical companies are knowingly manufacturing huge amounts of addicting drugs, many times the amounts which can actually be used by patients in pain. These profitable legal/criminal

indiscretions by big Pharma are possibly harming and killing just as many, if not more people, than are all the different illegal cartel drugs combined, including the associated drug-related murders by the cartels, and lesser associated drug dealers.

Until that night, the two gangs (Esteban's and Knifeman's) had been honoring a longstanding but shaky truce. No one in Esteban's gang was about to mention the demise of Knifeman to anyone, for then, they might have to face retaliation from his gang, as well as a possible murder charge from the police. It later came to light, that Knifeman was to have been backed-up by three mercenaries from Costa Rica, armed with semiautomatic rifles, who were not part of his gang. The mercenaries were waiting for Knifeman to come running passed their hiding place, then the three gunmen were going to gun down those men in Esteban's gang, who would have been giving chase. So, when Knifeman failed to show-up that night, no one in his gang cared, since they had not been told about his plan. They probably figured that he'd just hooked-up with some girl. The three mercenaries had been paid in advance, so after a few hours, they got tired of waiting and left. This tidbit of information later came from a guy named, Aimon,

one of the three black kings, I was soon to meet in Tepito, the aforementioned large black ghetto. Unbeknownst to Knifeman, the three shooters were friends with Quinto, also one of the three black kings.

Some of those people visiting at Esteban's that night, when Knifeman had been stabbed to death, had been young females, who seemed like they might have been loose cannons, and I had no idea about how many others had witnessed the demise of Knifeman. Eventually Knifeman's demise got back to his gang, but the three black kings of Tepito put out the word that Esteban was not to be touched. The night Knifeman was killed, I'd been shortsighted, not thinking about witnesses, only concerned about my surviving the incident, vacating the area, and taking care of my injured knee. Originally and wisely, I planned not to return to Esteban's, but like an idiot I did return.

Esteban never mentioned anything more about Knifeman, nor did any others in Esteban's gang, at least not to me. None of Esteban's group were wearing Knifeman's new tennis shoes. Esteban's gang was a careful lot, all of whom had all been around the block. That evening that I returned with Rosa,

the situation remained somewhat awkward, since Esteban could tell I was unsure about the killing of Knifeman. But it was Rosa, who broke the tension, when she told Esteban that I wanted to buy the hallucinogenic weed he'd given her and Mai. He was happy to help me, to buy the ganja.

“Sure Joey. How much you want?” Esteban asked.

“How much are you selling it for?” I inquired.

“Joey, I'm not selling any weed right now, but I'll help you get some, and the price depends on how much you want.” Esteban explained.

“I was hoping that you already had it. I'm looking for the same stuff that I smoked with Rosa, last night. That weed was unbelievable!” I mentioned.

The juxtaposition of the name “Rosa,” with the phrase “last night,” brought smiles to all their faces. Mexicans seem to love to hear about love, more so than most Americans. With the comment that I'd been with Rosa last night, our interaction seemed to transition back to normal.

“That amazing shit is fifty American dollars per kilo, and the place we can buy it is a ways from here,

and I'm not positive they still have that particular kind. It may be sold out, but if you want, we can go to try to get it." Esteban suggested.

That price was about eight or nine times less, than in the United States. A pound, back then in the US, which was less than half a kilo, was two hundred dollars. The high THC weed today, runs two to four thousand dollars a pound.

"Can I get half a kilo for twenty-five dollars?" I asked.

The lower price in Mexico probably had something to do with the American government's meddling; but back then, I wasn't too clear on how all that worked. Then, the meddling was largely managed on the state, county, and city levels, since the *DEA* wasn't a viable concern, yet. Technically, that agency had been founded in 1973, but didn't get rolling, until the early 1980s. The prices on weed, a plant which anyone can easily grow in their house, didn't jump-up in price, until the *DEA* and the cartels got involved. Both the *DEA* and the cartels now make money off weed. One receives federal funds to involve themselves with tracking it and arresting people, some *DEA* agents and staff take bribes. Plus the taxpayers give the *DEA* about \$3B per year.

Correspondingly, tons of cash go to the American legal system (police, state attorneys, defense attorneys, judges, clerks, etc.), then the prison corporations make more money, and the resultant prisoners, are used as cheap captive labor force for many major corporations. The cartels just gets paid for the weed. In reality, both of them (the US government and the cartels) are paid by the US citizens. The simple, and obvious solution to this foolish mare's nest, is to allow the people, who want to smoke weed, to grow their own! Why does the government need to poke its nose into the weed business? People who currently don't smoke weed are not likely to start using it once it's legal, since anyone who really wants some could now easily acquire it.

“You probably can; we just have to go see what they're serving these days. They get different shipments every few days. By the way, these guys don't sell their wares to women, and neither do they allow women into the building, where they keep all kinds of shit, so Rosa will have to wait, here. *God, her dad would love me leaving Rosa here at Esteban's!* It's fairly safe for you and me to go, but it's too risky for a woman to go into that black part of town;

especially a light skinned girl, and a pretty one like Rosa. It's not the black men who are the danger, but the big black women are often more jealous of light skinned women. Some black women can be evil with their jealousy, and Tepito is their zone." Esteban lectured me.

"Will this take long?" I asked, thinking about my leaving Rosa there, and what her overly tattooed criminal dad would think about that.

"Less than two or three hours probably... When we get in to the black section, just walk beside me, and let me do all the talking, Joey. They don't know you, and if they realize that you're an American, things might not go as well and the price of the weed will probably go up. People in Tepito usually don't care for gringos. You can pass for a Mexican, if you don't talk too much. Just use a few words, one or two, if you've absolutely have to talk. If they ask where you're from just say Durango, it's a state and a city, so it's a pretty safe bet. It's just northwest of here, and lots of people in the city are from Durango." Esteban and I left on foot in search of that excellent hallucinogenic weed. In those days, large areas of MC were clearly racially segregated. Nevertheless, compared to Mobile, Alabama there

were hardly any bigots. Rosa was the only one I'd meant. Most of MC was populated by racially mixed people. Even in those days, there were lots of blends of Latinos, Blacks, Asians, Whites, and indigenous Indians. The same was the case for the delicious coffees at a lot of MC's street cafe's... lot's tasty and unusual blends from all over the earth. After just having come from redneck Mobile, I was pleasantly shocked at the comparative lack of racial prejudice, and the love and kindness expressed by most of MC's people.

Many of the indigenous Indians looked like a darker more sturdily built Asian. Those Indian-Latino blends are often those guys you now see in America, picking fruit, roofing houses... happily working the hard menial jobs, which most Americans refuse to do. In those days in Mexico, there were many folks, where it was virtually impossible to decide their race. Now there's online DNA analysis for anyone to use, who really needs to know, where their ancestors come from. One day, the entire planet may be a single blend, in essence everyone will look fairly similar, then the racists will have to find something else to hate, and you can bet they'll have no problem accomplishing that feat. A hater can always find

something to hate, something to let those delightfully abhorrent brain cells squirt forth their blessed store of neurotransmitter.

To acquire, what I thought was going to be the ‘glowing neon-iguana’ wacky weed, Esteban and I had traveled on the subway, then got off a half mile from the largest black section of Mexico City, Tepito. Even in the early night, it was clear that we were not completely welcome as we strolled the dark narrow streets, filled solely with black faces, some curious about us, others glowering with suspicion, yet no one approached us. Occasionally, I’d see a man strolling or seated along on the edge of a lighted area with a shotgun in hand, or a pistol in a leather shoulder holster. This is a little like an armed camp. The armed men were either engaged in conversation, or sipping from a bottle or cup, or they’d casually watch us walk by. They didn’t seem even slightly threatening, just serious. Guns were the norm in Tepito, but according to Esteban, they weren’t so conspicuous in the daytime. He told me that Tepito’s warehouse had a small armory, and one of the three kings had his own large gun collection.

Now in the United States, there’s large numbers of people, who seem to be unjustly terrified of the

mere thought of a gun. Esteban explained that, while we weren't loved there, we'd be safe, as long as we didn't initiate a conversation, or deviate from our intended path, which led straight to the drug warehouse. *Wonder what would happen, if I have to duck down an alleyway to pee?* To walk through and conduct a little drug business was considered permissible; in fact, it was encouraged. During the day, Tepito was famous for its small flea market, but then, it was far more famous as a major source of drugs, and not just for Mexico City. Then it was also one of the national distribution hubs. Furthermore, the three kings of Tepito conducted several forms of illegal business, besides drugs; ergo, the three men, who ran Tepito, were always on the outlook for talent, and customers.

There actually weren't any signs which read, "BUYERS OF ILLEGAL DRUGS WELCOME... BRING LOTS OF CASH," but Esteban said that in truth, the residents of Tepito welcomed people coming to buy drugs, since drug money was one of their principal means of community support. The flea market and the drug trade were pure capitalism. Some of the profits of the drug trade were used to support social programs, benefitting the needy of Tepito. The three drug kings

also: provided security for their people, administered justice, provided some free medical care, as well as rendered disability care for the truly disabled and elderly. They also provided some forms of entertainment, which were the occasional drunken orgy, and regular boxing matches, both of which were extremely popular. Unlike most politicians, the three middle aged black rulers, seemed to enjoy the notoriety they'd garnered. In time, I came to realize that they enjoyed the respect of the residents more than they enjoyed their ill gotten wealth. Still, one of the three dealers openly relished killing. He was a murderous psychopath. After I'd gotten to know the three kings, I came to realize how scary he was; nonetheless, he was a handy man to have, since killing frequently goes hand and glove with dealing hard drugs. The smartest of the three was a controlled opium addict; I say controlled because he never increased his dosage, and he never consumed so much that he zoned-out. He didn't smoke the opium but drank it in hot coffee. The third of the three kings was something of a diplomat. I always thought of them as the crazy killer, the clever addict, and the reasonable diplomat.

As fate would have it, I would later repeatedly

visit the dismal little district, and come to know a number of its residents, many of which weren't too terribly different from the black people in my newspaper district in Mobile, Alabama. The poverty in Tepito was blatant. Nevertheless, it had its benefits: free health care, free nursing homes, free entertainment, and law enforcement (Quinto). But, even the better stores were nothing more than small crumbling cinderblock shacks, others were rickety wooden kiosks. In most cases, vendors simply displayed their goods on the ground, on top of blankets, or on pieces of paneling, or cardboard. A few people would even approach with goods in hand for sale, as is now often now done in the Mobile Flea Market... how the mighty have fallen; of course, Mexico has fallen further, that's why people are getting the hell out of there. A very large percentage of the merchandise in the Tepito Flea Market was purloined, much as now the case at the Mobile Flea Market.

Many of the people's lodgings were made from things such as: packing crates, sheets of corrugated tin, thrown-out portions of cabinets, assorted pieces of scrap lumber crudely nailed together, wall paneling, plastic sheeting, tarps, aluminum foil,

painted canvas, etc. Water proofing was done with things such as: wax paper, saran wrap, tar, calk, exterior paint, etc. Apartments, like Rosa's in the tilting yellow cinderblock building, with the crazy little brown dog, were luxurious in comparison. Most of the streets in Tepito were impassable, except for foot traffic, due to the aforementioned ramshackle living quarters, and makeshift shops.

Obviously, the majority of the street shanties lacked running water, albeit a few received water, via a few hoses from a nearby houses and buildings. The people filled various plastic containers from facets on the sides of the stores, but at least in those days, the water in Mexico City was pure, unlike the water in industrialized polluted Mobile. Mexican authorities felt that is was the lacustrine clays, which under lied most of the city, which formed a protective, impermeable barrier, preventing the downward migration of the city's contaminants, into their aquifer. In many parts of Tepito, open shallow trenches served as bathroom facilities. Esteban explained that the rains would later flush-out the trenches, and hopefully not enough to make them over-flow into the surrounding living areas. The trenches were dug so as to flow downhill, and away

from the homes, but a certain amount of water was needed to do that, and so sometimes, a small brief rain could be worse than no rain. If it got bad enough, hoses were used to flush-out the trenches. Most of Tepito was taken-up by the open air market and the living quarters. It was no wonder that periodic plagues of cholera and flu were known to sweep through Tepito, and into the surrounding blocks, just outside Tepito. Usually killing a few dozen; at least, according to what Esteban told me. Esteban said that some of the victims died quickly. The associated diarrhea can be so severe that the electrolyte imbalance causes brain and/or cardiac dysfunction. The person just mercifully slips into a coma, then dies.

Nevertheless, the many times I'd walk through Tepito, to buy wholesale drugs, very few people ever appeared to be sick. But the smell from those open sewage trenches was more than slightly notable, reminding me of my first day in Spain. Another remarkable fact about this barrio was that there were no police, none what-so-ever; none on foot and none in cars, yet there was little crime. Most crimes were commented by the residents stealing from the tourists. Tepito wasn't without its own homegrown

law enforcement, in the form of a one man police-force, the aforementioned psychopathic king of Tepito. Esteban insisted, that because of him, crime was lower in that black community, than in most other parts of the city. The drug lords did not have any court system or jail, offenders were not tried by a jury of their peers, nor were they locked-away. Without a trial or a jail, the punishments tended to be quick and harsh, and in certain cases, deadly. The three kings just considered the evidence, and then the one aforementioned psychopathic king, Quinto, would administer the appropriate punishment. The three kings operated with complete impunity. Due to a substantial annual payment to politicians and certain cops, the Mexican government unofficially recognized the autonomy of the three kings. There was no need for lawyers, police, juries, courtrooms, court staff or records, prison, jail, etc. The three kings just considered the evidence, talked to various people, and Quinto administered what had been determined as fair.

Periodically, the criminal punishments were publicly advertised, other times the guilty party was quietly buried in Morelos, a vacant area south of the city. Public beatings were the norm, and generally

fair, in that the level of beating was commiserate with the crime. The drug lords were the judges and punishers, as well as the caretakers for the borough and its residents. It was like a small country, unto itself. One king was graced with common sense and excellent social skills, and so he was more or less the envoy of the drug trade, and more. As mentioned, another was the dangerous psychopath, and the third was an intelligent highly creative opium addict. As different as the three were, they worked well together, and they were more than mere friends.

Tepito was in the Cuauhtemoc borough of the city, bordered by Avenida del Trabajo, Eje 1, Eje 2, and Paseo de la Reforma. If a cop trespassed into that municipal zone, which Mexicans affectionately referred to as the 'little temple,' or Tepito, said uninvited cop was considered as fair game. Hence, without the permission of the three kings, no cops ventured into the barrio, which was inhabited by roughly twenty-thousand black residents, and roughly five thousand or so mixed race folks, with a few Asians and a handful of white and Latin women, and not one white man; at least none that I noticed. Consequently, I found it to be something of an honor to be the only white guy, allowed to transit through

Tepito at any hour. Considering the growth of MC, Tepito is now probably twice that size, though I honestly have no clue. For all I know, it may now be gone, nor do I know if the three kings still exist.

The only reasons a cop would venture into Tepito was to receive his payoff money, or to relay information to the three kings, but that was only after he had first contacted the three kings, for permission to enter. Unlike many of the smaller businesses in MC, the three kings had a telephone in their drug warehouse, but the three kings were well aware of possible wiretaps. Consequently, a cop calling for permission to enter, would have a friend make the call, and a password would be used for identification. The location to enter Tepito would have been arranged, during the previous visit, so only thing to be settled on the phone was the time, which always after dark. The appointed escort would arrive early at the prearranged location. Having received permission, the cop would show-up dressed in civilian clothes, wearing shades, and often a wig or hat. Esteban could enter safely, since the three kings knew Esteban, as a regular drug buyer and as a security guard for some of their drug shipments, and so they had introduced him to many of the residents,

and the night, when I was in search of the psychedelic wacky weed, I could enter Tepito, simply because I was accompanied by Esteban.

If one of the three kings, usually Quinto, or one of their appointees would escort the cop, at other times, there was an eighty-five year-old woman, who carried a concealed pistol, who escorted the cop to the warehouse. The primary reason cops would receive payoffs was for their intel, usually concerning half-hearted efforts by law enforcement, to interfere with the black dealers' drug shipments, or with their other illegal businesses. Most cops would settle for small payoffs, since when it came to the three kings, it didn't pay to get greedy. The consequences for being greedy could be dire, indeed.

Soon, I was to find out that the three kings ran a variety of businesses, legal, such as: one coffee shop, three smoke shops, two bakeries, boxing events, sports gambling, and three restaurants. They also ran semi-legal businesses: two liquor stores, which boosted stolen liquor, and they sold stolen Peruvian and Brazilian gold bullion {disc shapes and actual minted coinage}. Moreover, the three kings ran standard illegal businesses: drugs, counterfeit money, forged passports and other IDs, fake bearer bonds,

black market medicines, and prostitution. Since the Tepito community and its three kings were, for all practical purposes, autonomous, receiving no form of social aid or law enforcement from the surrounding city, while enforcing their own laws and furnishing their own social services, then who's to say that they're illegal businesses were in fact illegal? Functionally, they were like their own small nation; perhaps, not too dissimilar from how some of the American Indian Nations currently function in the United States.

While the feds do have some jurisdiction over the Indian reservations/territories in the United States, the Mexican Federales didn't exert any influence over the three kings. Today, four crime groups effectively run MC: the Gulf Cartel, the Zetas, the Familia Michoacana, and the Beltran Leyva Organization. They also run much of the Mexican government, including el presidente. Those gangs are sort of like Islam and Christianity, in that they only employ both the whip and the carrot; instead of hell and heaven, they use torture and death as the whip, and money as the carrot.

During the morning and early afternoon, tourists were welcome to attend the aforementioned Tepito

Flea Market, but around two or three pm, the flea market closed and the tourists were warned to leave. The huge open air market had been operating there, since long before the Spanish came to the area in the 1500s! The Tepito Flea Market may well be the world's oldest flea market! The ancient Aztecs initiated the market. It was their old place of commerce. Even the old Parisian Saint Ouen Flea Market didn't begin, until the 1870s, when ragpickers, were evicted from the center of Paris. So much history goes unrecorded, especially if it doesn't directly bare on some greedy governmental interest, or the ridiculous concerns of some major religion.

“Okay Joey, we walk in, purchase the half kilo, and walk out. Don't try to be too friendly. Sometimes, you're too talkative, Joey. We just do our business and leave. Understand? Let me do all the talking. I've done this many times and they know me, very well. They're going to search us, when we get to the warehouse, so make sure your new knife is folded closed, and in your open palm, not in your pocket. They don't like finding surprises.” Esteban instructed.

After the brief trek into the core of desolate Tepito, we came to a two story, wood frame, tin-covered warehouse. Like Rosa's non-vertical

apartment building, it too possessed a slight deviation from the vertical, and would probably also fall in the upcoming 1985 earthquake, then ten years into the future. Some of the tin sliding had been recently replaced, yet in others areas, the tin was old and extremely rusty, so rusty I could almost feel my jaw trying to spasm. The declining edifice was not what you'd expect wealthy hardcore drug dealers to be using, but then, none of them usually lived in the structure. All three had rather lavish homes; nevertheless, they spent little time in those expensive homes. Most of the time, they were in that tetanus-loving rusty warehouse, or at one of their other previously mentioned businesses.

Looking into the entrance foyer of the tin warehouse, I saw two lean men in their thirties, both apparently mixed black Mexicans, sitting on plain wooden three legged stools, under a glaringly bright bare bulb, just ten feet inside. The men were playing cards on a small beat-up folding card table, sharing a large bottle of what looked like wine. Oddly, proper-up on the wall next to them was a huge cross, adorned with a life sized painted carved wooden statute of Jesus Christ. Nailed to a realistic full-sized wooden cross, the semi nude wooden Christ seemed

to be watching, the two men playing their card game, through half closed lids. *Gambling at the foot of the cross...* The crucifix was literally too tall for the room, so the base of the cross was propped-out three or four feet out from the wall, and the top of the cross ran-up to the junction, where the wall meant the ceiling. *I wonder if these two guys stole that cross from some cathedral.* Jesus's actual cross was about 11 feet or 3.5 meters long and six inches wide. It had an estimated diameter (diameter because it was actually made of two logs) of 15 centimeters, with an approximate weight of around 100 pounds.

Both the men wore sweat-stained light tan leather shoulder holsters over the outside of their conventional white short sleeved shirts, ergo that the pistols were plainly visible... large caliber semi-automatics. The holsters were ornately tooled, well-wore, and unsnapped for speedy access, but the visible shiny dark bluing on the pistols implied the weapons were relatively new. The guns made me realize that Esteban's comment about the police never entering Tepito was likely true. The two men represented a small part of Tepito's law enforcement. As I would later discover, those two guys were personnel bodyguards for the three kings, and the

two lived and slept in the warehouse. Their job was to protect whatever happened to be in the warehouse, but they did not accompany the three kings away from the warehouse. When the kings went out somewhere, in the city, they used a female bodyguard, Amparo, considered by the people of Tepito to be an excellent killer. She started out as a hunter, killed her abusive husband, killed a couple of people in prison, then once she got out, she carried-out deadly assignments for Quinto.

Never would I actually get to know those two entrance guards; at least, not like I would come to know the three black kings, and Amparo. Like the three kinds, Amparo lived outside Tepito. Whenever, I came to Tepito to buy drugs, if Amparo wasn't on duty guarding the three kings, she'd take me to her impeccably clean and ordered apartment, and we'd sleep together. She had a so-so face, and a great body so she always wore tight clothes, and was great in bed, but had some rather specific things she liked to do, and so there was little in the way of variety. Amparo was one of those rare females, who craved sex, but didn't seem to establish any genuine emotional involvement. She knew all about Rosa, but could have cared less.

Both of the armed men at the warehouse entrance had been highly decorated soldiers, and had later served in various wars throughout Central and South America as hired mercenaries. Once called into action, the two men were supposedly unmatched in speed and accuracy, as well as being known for their lack of mercy. Both were okay with killing for cash. They served whomever paid, not fighting for freedom or justice, just for money. Soon after meeting them, I would regularly play five card stud with them. Once, I foolishly asked the two guards, “How do you feel about killing for money?”

“That’s all any soldier does. Young soldiers like to think they are fighting for their country, but in truth all wars are fought for money... to steal money, or to make money for the companies that make the weapons. Everything you hear about patriotism is what some political asshole wants you to believe. Wars are always over money... somebody’s money. At least, we didn’t kill women and children, but killing is still killing. When you’re fighting in a war, you only fight for money, and for the guy next to you, nothing else. All that other stuff about patriotism is lies the school teachers tell their students. Fighting a war for patriotism is just some

politician making money at your expense. The politicians get the wealth and power, and the soldiers get the bullets.”

Years later, I'd come to realize that America's troops were employed for the same reasons: money, power, spoils of war, etc. Our fighting men are often convinced that the people, they're killing, are 'evil,' and attempting to destroy our nation... a genuine threat to our freedom. And yes, there rarely has been the war fought for a just cause. Now, our soldiers are killing at the behest of large corporations, so that they (the corporations) can sell more, bullets, uniforms, missiles, helmets, rations, radar, telecommunications, aircraft, jet fuel, tires, trucks, artillery pieces and rounds, bombs, small arms, boots, grenades, humvees, generators, tanks, ships, nuclear weapons, laser and particle beam weapons, mines (land and sea), knives, submarines, etc. These are also fought so the US government (politicians), corporations, and its intelligence agencies can justify their budgets, and share in the spoils.

As we approached the entrance to the warehouse, the two armed men reflectively spotted Esteban and me, the second we'd come into the edge of the light shining outside the warehouse. As they

stood, each put the palm of his right hand atop their left shoulder, just above their weapon. Esteban pointed to the floor above, letting the guards know that we wanted to go upstairs. The guards patted us down for weapons. One guard took Knifeman's closed knife from my palm, then slipped it back in my left front pants pocket, and told me to leave it there.

Only a couple of words were exchanged, and everyone played their assigned role. The guards examined the family jewels, yet not with their open palm or fingers, but by politely nudging our groins with the back of their wrist. After the pat-down, they gestured toward the wooded stairs, indicating we could then ascend. It was apparent they knew and trusted Esteban; nonetheless, they still searched him. Esteban told them I was his friend, and a new buyer... business as usual. The two simply nodded. One of the men, then yelled.

“Two coming-up.” One guard called up the stairs.

“Come ahead.” Someone from above answered.

Climbing the stairs, Esteban momentarily stopped me to point-out, that the boards covering one of the steps had been removed, so had any

dangerous armed thief, who somehow managed to get past the two door guards, to rush up the stairs, might easily brake a leg, or at least, be dramatically stalled. Another precautionary feature was a large piece of chain linked fencing on a heavy metal pipe frame, which was hinged on one side, with a slip knotted piece of rope holding-up the other end. One quick pull of the slip knot and the heavy iron pipes and chainlink would drop over the opening to the second floor, making it impossible for anyone to easily gain access to the second floor.

If the three kings were not in the building, and the building was closed for sales, then the two men, would have locked the front doors, but stayed inside the building for the night. They had orders to shoot anyone trying to enter the building. As Esteban and I stepped-up onto the second level, I noticed it had a bare plywood floor, which creaked loudly. Two heavily muscled older black men, as well as one tall, slightly younger, light skinned racially mixed man, were looking intently in our direction. Those three guys were the three kings of Tepito. At the time, I didn't realize the magnitude of their role in the Mexican drug trade, nor did I realize that the reason I was being allowed to enter the tin structure was

due to the minor part I'd played in the death of Knifeman. Unbeknownst to me, Esteban had already informed them that it was a white gringo, who'd assisted him with Knifeman that fatal evening. They also noticed the tape and slight swelling on my left knee.

The room was strictly bare-bones. There was nothing remotely impressive about the place. It was made for business, and was lit by glaring unshaded bulbs screwed into cheap plain white ceramic sockets, hanging on the exposed rafters. More lights hung above Esteban and I, than did the rest of the large room, making it harder for us to see them and easier for those three men in the room to see Esteban and me, and so I shaded my eyes with my right hand. There was no wall covering, only the tin siding nailed to the framing of vertical rough-cut wooden two-by-twelves planks.

The tall light skinned younger man stood behind a worn plywood table, which rested on eight four-by-four posts, near the far wall. The status symbol of a simple heavy-duty black bakelite rotary-dial phone rested on top of the table. That tall guy seemed overly loose and relaxed, while the other two were fairly intense. *He's fucking high on something.* He just

stood there smiling, with his back propped-up on the vertical edge of a piece of two-by-twelve framing. The skin on his face seemed to have a slight reflective sheen of sweat or sebum. Like the two guys downstairs, he wore a pistol in a shoulder holster over his shirt. Unlike everyone else, he didn't seem tense. However, the other two, more serious looking guys, were seated in chairs on either side of the room, and each had a shotgun, laying in his lap, pointed roughly in our direction. Their hands were on the guns: one hand by the trigger assembly, and the other in the more forward portion of the gun. The two guys were ready for trouble, yet weren't threatening. They were vigilant and strategically positioned, so that when Esteban and I arrived at the top of the stairs, they were about fifteen feet to either side of us, and a few feet forward. *They could blast us back down the stairs.* As mentioned, the two with the shotguns were not men in the spring-time of their lives, but older men working in what most people think of as a young man's game. *Maybe old men can kill more easily.* Frequently, I've thought that, if it wasn't for the physical demands of combat (running, fighting, jumping, etc.), the killing part would be better carried out by old men.

Later, I'd learn that one of the men was forty-eight and the other fifty-one. Now that I much older than that, those ages seem relatively young. On the other hand, killing may not come more easily to some with age, especially if they hadn't killed at some point in their life, and of course, the reason for killing can play into the deed. The movie, *The Godfather*, had come out a couple of years prior. Standing at the top of the stairs, in that old warehouse, I recalled how the young Michael Corleone, who was played by Al Pacino, had seemed highly stressed about killing the two guys in the restaurant, but as the years passed, killing became second nature for him. It was as if killing was just another aspect of running the family business. *These two older men don't have a problem killing. It's just part of business, just like Vietnam.* Our arrival wasn't exactly like a warm family reunion, although some families might dispute that.

Still, the two men weren't completely unfriendly; they just sort of remained stuck in first gear, with the engine revving, but the clutch was still depressed. They displayed no smile, yet neither were they menacing, but only maintained a watchfulness. However, one of the two shotgun totting guys looked

a bit sinister. His head began nodding for some reason, and then he began to display a knowing malicious grin. *Is he trying to psych me out, or just looking for an excuse?* Later, I'd learn he was a natural born killer, high functioning psychopath; by 'high functioning,' I mean that he'd learned to control his deadly impulses, so he was only conducting the more bloody aspects of business, rather than committing purposeless acts of violence to satisfy his nature.

On the plywood floor, next to each of the two darker, shotgun-toting gentlemen, sat an open box of twelve gauge shotgun shells, a tall brown bottle of beer, and a sandwich. The two beers apparently weren't cold, since there was no sweat on the outside of the bottles. The partially eaten greasy roast beef sandwiches were on shiny greasy semi-translucent pieces of brown paper. The smell of the sandwiches, coupled with the smell of beer, made me hungry. Apparently, Esteban and I had interrupted their evening meal. As we stepped forward, I noticed one sandwich appeared to have pickles and mustard; the other looked like it had only mustard. The psychopath's lacked the pickles. For some reason, I remembered those little details, for later. Perhaps, because food was the least bizarre aspect to the

situation. There was a third sandwich on the table across the room, but it was too far away to yet deduce its condiments. The nodding psychopath was still slowly chewing his last bite of sandwich. The more I looked at the food, the more I realized I was starving, owing to the long trek across the city.

The grinning nodding psychopathic gunman swallowed, then noticed me eyeballing his sandwich, and semi-threateningly raised his eyebrows, along with the right side of his upper lip, as if to say, ‘What do you think you’re doing, eyeballing my sandwich?’ I smiled, so he changed his sneer to a frown. Eyeing that sandwich was a bit like gently growling at a semi-angry dog. But he wasn’t about to kill me over my looking at his sandwich. He was not the kind, who quickly formed friendships. Later, he would try to be my friend, but I remained leery of him.

In those days, if I wasn’t asleep, I was either horny or hungry, and most nights I hardly slept. *God, its great to be out of Mobile!* The less menacing, of the two seated men, held what looked like a sawed-off *Ithaca* pump. The more dangerous looking guy had some off-brand of sawed-off double-barrel. *That’s the only kind of shotgun you want to saw off... a cheap one.* I’d always enjoyed the simplicity of the double

barrel, finding it to be awkward to be racking the next shell, when using a pump. It throws-off timing and aim, compromising accuracy, and rate of fire. Most pumps in those days held five shells, long as you didn't put the plug in the tube. Now there are shotguns with longer tubes, as well as machine-gun shotguns. Still, I favor the old double barrel. After all, there's something admirable about being good enough, that you don't need the extra shots.

There's something to be said for the business end of a twelve gauge. Though they're about the size of a penny, they looked like manholes. Mr. Double-barrel also had a burning roach on the floor, producing a sweet aromatic thin grayish-white ribbon of smoke threading upwards, next to one of his chair-legs. *Wonder if he's seeing neon iguanas?* People, who are capable of great violence, while stoned on weed, are treacherous people, indeed. Mr. Double-barrel worried me, for there he was, evidently high on weed, and looking meaner than a badger with painful hemorrhoids. It was clear that the man enjoyed killing. *He's nodding, and hoping to inspire a confrontation... a real natural born killer!* It was like the man had sworn an oath of allegiance to killing.

Everyone has a genetic blueprint, laying out their basic personality and appearance. While life's experiences do change us, pop psychologists, downplay the importance of DNA, exaggerating the import of life's experiences, adding credibility to their dubious, less than scientific, profession.

A Rusty Bubble, by Moe A. Wallrey

The two older guys were plainly comfortable with their guns. Now days, so many people, buy powerful sophisticated weapons, with all the technically advanced bells and whistles, but in a gun fight, usually nothing beats being immanently familiar, with a highly dependable weapon, regardless of its price tag. For many people, it's the first weapon they used to hunt with, or the gun their Dad first taught them to shoot. I'd grown-up with shotguns, and often used double barrels, and so I prefer them. Their main drawback is that they can't be easily concealed.

Since I'd spent more than half my life around people with guns, I felt an affinity with the two armed men, and so remained relaxed. Though I sensed that Mr. Double-barrel was a sociopathic killer, I also realized that he had no valid reason to

kill me, especially when there was business to be conducted, and Esteban was their regular customer, and the atmosphere in the room was one of business, although with a slight edge, which whispered two things: you don't fuck with us, and we don't fuck with you.

The murderous psychopath, motivated by selfishness, is frail, compared to the man, who kills with just motive.

Hot Wire War by Willy M. Amore

These were men, the likes of which I'd been partially familiar with, men capable of sudden decisive violence, yet those three men were different. While they looked-out for their community they clearly operated for personal gain. They were the three black kings of Tepito. Esteban and I hadn't brought enough money with us to be worth robbing. Besides, the three men were by no means thieves, and we represented possible future business. As it turned out, I later brought them considerable business, while becoming something of a friend. The armed situation in the tin warehouse was actually

more preferable, than buying drugs in wild crazy New Orleans from Harold, who was usually surrounded by all his whacked-out friends. For my tastes, the New Orleans crowd were too unpredictable, and the men with shotguns weren't.

Later, I'd come to realize, it was the light skinned tall man across the room who used opium, still he never once got sloppy or stepped out of line. He was a deep roller so to speak. So deep, he needed opium to deal with the depth. He genuinely liked people, but several times in his life, he'd had put it all on the line. His nickname was Bicho and he was not the actual boss, for they had formed a near perfect triumvirate, sharing equally in the ruling power. Never in my life had I seen such cooperation, between business partners. Perhaps, their symbiosis was owing to the fact, that they were each so vastly different, but with a common purpose, which it forced them to appreciate their differences.

Esteban and I walked across the creaking echoing plywood floor toward Bicho, who calmly stood behind the table. Next to the phone was another warm beer and a sandwich on greasy brown paper... mustard and pickles. We stopped, and my stomach growled, and Bicho smiled. Then Esteban's head gave

a slight nod as he requested the half kilo, of the same stuff he'd bought last time. The guy said something to Mr. Pump-Shotgun, whose name I later learned was Aimon, who then got-up stepped into a small corner room and came out with something poorly wrapped-up in plain newspaper, and loosely sealed with two strips of beige masking tape. He walked over and handed the package to Bicho, while keeping his distance, still holding the pump in his other hand. Aimon then returned to his chair.

Looking back at Mr. Double-barrel, who I later learned was named Quinto, I noticed his roach had gone out. He wasn't paying attention to me, but rather was looking down at what was left of his extinguished roach, sandwich, and beer. A few years before, he'd self-proclaimed the name, Quinto, after he'd killed five men in the same night. The last man to die had managed to shoot Quinto through his left lung. Quinto was the self-educated thespian in the theater of murder. For all their evil, psychopaths still often crave attention and praise, and therefore possess an abundance self-aggrandizement, charm, and absurd behavior. They often hate rejection, as much, if not more than most folks. Their lives are led to glorify their own existence, and for that, they need

people to praise them, hence people are either loyal, or they are bad.

Esteban had placed my twenty-five dollars on the plywood table, and so Bicho silently handed Esteban the taped newspaper bundle. Esteban didn't open it, but just said, "Bueno..." and passed it back to me, motioning for me to head toward the stairs. Bicho said, "Adios." Mr. Double-barrel, again slightly sneered as we passed. We descended the stairs, being mindful of the missing step, nodded to the two guys at the entrance, then headed out onto the dark streets of Tepito.

As it turned out, the kush we'd purchased, though great stuff, was disappointedly not treated with the hallucinogenic humito, which Rosa and I had smoked the night before, so there was no more imaginary glowing lizards, and no more having sex with an entire city. Never again would I run into that particular quality of weed. For sanity's sake, perchance that was just as well. It was probably just a couple of clicks, from acid on the schizophrenic-hallucinatory scale.

In the darkness, Esteban and I walked the narrow streets of Tepito, with the cumbersome half kilo taped and wrapped in old newspaper. Lacking street

lamps, the barrio was exceptionally dark. What little light there was principally came from the doorways of the shanty homes, usually generated by candlelight, or kerosene lanterns. There was also the light from the surrounding city. Everyone knew what we were carrying, but not a soul would bother us. The citizens of Tepito only casually glanced at us, and just a few smiled. Esteban explained that if anyone had robbed us, the three kings, from whom we'd just bought the weed, would have sought revenge for our loss, thereby protecting their drug business. If word got out that a drug buyer had been harassed in Tepito, it could have harmed business for the three kings.

Esteban mentioned that the three men conducted various forms of enterprise besides drugs: selling gold, emeralds, counterfeit currency and bearer bonds, forged passports, as well as death and birth certificates. Not every cop made it back out of Tepito. The rumor was that a few cops just couldn't resist the urge to make a threat, to garner a bigger payoff, and a threat was meant with zero tolerance, which was plainly Quinto's delight, since he had an extra large deadly piece of gray matter. As a child at the movies, I had that same arrangement of neurons,

always hoping that the movie's evil murderer would succeed and get away with his bloody crime, and as a small child, I'd once tried to burn a neighbor's house down. I was not yet three years of age. There was a pile of cleaning rags under their kitchen sink. It was nice weather, and they were eating lunch at a picnic table in their backyard. It was an easy matter to sneak in their front door, open the cabinet doors, strike a match, which I'd brought from my house and toss it into the rags. I then made good my escape undetected. The smoke quickly alerted the family, and the fire was extinguished by the father, using the garden hose, and the damage was minimal. The origin of the fire went undiscovered. It was just something to do. My only motive was curiosity, wanting to see what a big fire looked like. Having excellent parents is probably the only thing which kept me from being like Quinto.

After a couple of minutes of walking, Esteban ducked into a tiny late night eatery, and came out with a plain brown paper bag, into which I deposited my newspaper-wrapped one pound parcel. After folding the bag tightly closed, to keep down the pungent odor, we jogged a short way, then caught the subway, back to Esteban's neighborhood. This

time, we rode on top of the train car, laying on our backs traveling in the dark. We'd be looking up at the stars one moment, then at the stone ceiling of the tunnel, the next. It was deafeningly loud in the subway system. By riding atop the train, we didn't have to pay a fare, and avoided the police, who sometimes rode inside the passenger cars. It was something Esteban had been doing since he was a young boy, and something which I later do each time I left Tepito. In those days, he was simply too poor to pay the fare. We had approached the subway car from the opposite side of the loading platform, and used the vertical ladders located between the cars, to climb on top. Resting on our backs, in the rumbling darkness, I began to wonder where I could possibly hide my recent bulky purchase. Invariably there are worrisome complications, when dealing drugs, which if not properly addressed, can produce dire consequences. Drug dealing is not for everyone, and you must be content to lead a paranoid existence. Riding atop the railcar, I thought about how the three black kings had no doubt come from poverty and had carved out a lucrative niche, right in the center of Mexico City's dark dismal world of poverty. Though morally repugnant and the destroyer of lives, I considered their nefarious business dealings to be

an impressive achievement, much as Blue's mother had perceived her son as a good and productive man. Blue was one of the two aforementioned gangsters, in Mobile, who had shot at, and likely hit, Shades, a.k.a., Rocketman, the informant who very nearly got me arrested.

When again I went to see the three kings, I went in the daytime. Somehow Esteban had secured my permission to enter, whenever I chose, apparently knifeman was no friend of the three kings. There were considerable amounts of music and dancing, almost a festival like atmosphere, when I returned. The people of Tepito seemed to always be playing music. With a larger amount of cash in my pockets, I had come prepared to purchase considerably more dope and brought along six brown glass bottles of *Negra Modelo*, in a strong ice-filled plastic bag, and in a paper bag I also carried six barbecue sandwiches; all had mustard, with pickles on the side; a sandwich and a beer for each of us: the two guards with pistols downstairs, the three kings upstairs, and myself. Attention to detail, can make the difference. Over the next few months, and several drug purchases, the warehouse guys loosened-up, and actually became congenial, perhaps the reason being that they sensed

that I had no hidden agendas. For the next several months, I mostly purchased kilos of weed and bricks of hash, but occasionally capsules of mescaline, to sell to the tourists. In addition, I shared a bit of weed with Esteban's group and Rosa. Most of my customers were visiting Americans, and others were from South America, Europe, and a few from Canada.

Bicho, the tall light-skinned opium user, was originally from San Juan, Puerto Rico, close to Bahia Puerto Nuevo. He told me it was a small town on a beautiful beach. At age thirteen, he piloted a small fishing boat, traveling roughly ten miles out into the open waters to collect drugs from a large South American yacht. Then, Bicho began to help with the overland delivery of the drugs to a few dealers in San Juan. At age fifteen, he shot and killed two dealers, who tried to ripoff his delivery. His name, 'Bicho,' was the Spanish word for 'bug,' and contrary to that more common meaning, the nickname had reverse meaning and was actually a flattering designation. According to the other two kings, Bicho possessed a renown sexual organ, which I later witnessed at one of their popular sex orgies. As one might expect, the women literally flocked to Bicho, but because of his semi-controlled narcotic addiction, he was frequently

disinterested in their attentions, yet whenever he began to approach borderline withdrawals, he became something of a sexual animal. Bicho craved women's companionship and advice, seemingly more than their sex. In that respect, he was your atypical Latino male.

Quinto and Aimon referred to Bicho and me as refugees, since neither of us were from Mexico. Even when somewhat high on opium, Bicho was the brains of the operation, which as Esteban had mentioned, encompassed considerably more commerce, than merely importing and dealing drugs. However, Bicho didn't smoke the opium, but rather he dissolved the black buddy in coffee, and added some brandy. Over time, I came to realize that the psychopathic Quinto though quite large and muscular, was not a clumsy man, but possessed the balanced movements, one might see in a skilled boxer. In fact, he somewhat resembled a black version of the old white boxer, Rocky Marciano, including the broken tumid nose, and neanderthal brows. Though unlike the boxer, Quinto was a born sadist. Marciano had a sweet unassuming personality.

Staring into Quinto's eyes was a bit like looking into the twin barrels of his shotgun. No matter how

he arranged his face, I could always see the evil little child in him. Part of his brain was like a backed-up septic tank swimming with dark deeds; nonetheless, he still was remarkably comfortable in his own skin. While these comments may make him seem a bit dull or slow witted, he wasn't, quite the contrary. My bet was that he suffered with manic depression. Another stand-out trait was that Quinto was irritatingly arrogant. He was also a narcissist; forever combing his dyed brown hair, but trying to do so, when he thought no one was looking, feeling the need to hide his vanity, apparently recognizing it as a weakness. Most likely, he had once been a good-looking lady's man.

Quinto didn't believe in anything: no hereafter, no hell, no heaven, nothing but his own glory, yet he wore a small gold cross, and occasionally attended church, but proudly told me that the only reason he'd enter the confessional was for the joy of shocking the priest.

"Sometimes, I make stuff-up just to shock those stupid priests, who like little boys. They are such evil cocksuckers! One day, I'm going to fuck one with my shotgun, and blow him to hell." He once told me.

Quinto had taken the cross, from a man he'd

tortured and murdered, with a pair of pliers and a hammer. The man had stolen a drug shipment, and had managed to sell half of it before Quinto caught him. Contrastingly, Quinto did at times extend kindness to the elderly of Tepito, frequently driving them to the doctor's, or to visit their relatives, as well he often brought them their medicine, and fancy foods. He'd even read books, and the newspaper to them. Perhaps his care for the elderly was his form of atonement. Most psychopaths have those good deeds they can periodically wave in your face, should you suspect their true nature. They like to think of themselves as fooling you, but in truth, they only fool the slow ones. Quinto kept a virtual armory of guns and ammo in his home, and seemed to be praying for a riot to break-out. He loved to brag about his gun collection and stockpile of ammunition, and how much devastation he could inflict, if the world would just cooperate and go crazy. Because of the worsening Mexican economy, he was sure a revolution was just around the corner. He also was fond of saying that Armageddon was coming. He was sort of reminded me of some of America's modern day survivalists. Quinto seemed to believe that some social upheaval was absolutely inevitable. Likewise, many of Mobile's Southern Baptists have been

believing the second coming is nearly upon us, for as long as I can remember, those folks have been hoping that Jesus is about to return. Perchance, some people are never content with the way things are, so something big always needs to be in the offing. Quinto also believed that men, who could 'take it to the next level (kill),' could have anything they wanted.

I think Aimon was there just for his third of the proceeds, to help manage the operations, and communicate with their drug suppliers, mules, and dealers. He was diplomatic and strictly business, and always predictable; not a natural born killer, as was Quinto. Aimon was polite, drank in moderation, and smoked a little weed and hash, but did nothing harder. He was a calm dependable soldier, occasionally helping Quinto to dispatch justice, both in the community of Tepito, as well as to dishonest competitors. But mostly, he ran the three king's various businesses, hiring and firing, motivating, delivering, making pick-ups, and handling the negotiations, supervising the three counterfeiters. Of the three kings, Aimon was the closest to being normal. All three was extremely bright men, but each in their own way.

After a few visits, the three kings seemed to have relaxed when around me. According to them, I was the only polite and respectful, college educated, gringo, they knew, plus liked that I was non-judgmental. I regularly purchased their wares, paid in cash up front, served as a counterfeit document and money currier, and gave them a few ideas concerning how to conceal their drug shipments. A few times, when they needed an English speaker on the telephone to effectively represent their interests. Once I spoke on an overseas line to a drug lord in southeast Asia, who spoke good English, but very poor Spanish, concerning a rather large hash deal, 1200 kilos. The money was sent by courier, and the delivery came by freighter to Puerto Vallarta. The Laotian drug lord had refused to accept the Mexican peso, and refused to offload the hash, demanding that Aimon's men carry it off the boat, in the dark, on a specified date. Now days, the night vision equipment is so good, you can actually see better than in the daylight, and even the colors are vividly clear.

When dealing with the lawless, it pays to be honest.

Roy A. Mewler

Aimon and Bicho had wives and kids, which lived in houses on the outskirts of the city. Each man also kept his own residence in the city, but outside of Tepito. Quinto lived in Polanco, an affluent district of MC. He had a six bedroom, four bath flat, about seven thousand square feet, yet he was the only one who lived there. He had married several times, but only had kids with one woman. The former wife and kids lived far away from the city. Quinto regularly described how evil his wife and kids were, but Aimon and Bicho said that they were just the opposite, extremely good people. Generally, if the wife or girlfriend of a psychopath leaves them, the psychopath tends to claim they were horrible people. Quinto liked to claim that his wife had cheated on him, when everyone else told me that the reverse was true. For some reason, Quinto felt the powerful need to misrepresent them. Perhaps, because he was afraid that they might tell the truth about him. For the obvious reason of self-preservation, I never told Quinto that I knew he was a psychopath, or that I knew he was full of shit. Nevertheless, I did enjoy his company because he was so energetic, and definitely

not boring.

Every room of Quinto's home was beautifully furnished, giving the impression that a large family lived there, yet only the occasional hooker came to visit Quinto, and once a week a maid thoroughly cleaned the place. The place was impeccably clean, since as mentioned, he was a major germaphobe. The dining room had an extremely long dining table made of costly agarwood, which was always set, as if dinner for fourteen were about to be served. The maid cleaned the unused dining set-up every week. The maid would be ordered to leave, if she so much as sneezed or coughed. Quinto was terrified of sick people and public restrooms. He'd hired a female interior decorator to arrange and furnish his home. The decorator was indebted to, and terrified of, Quinto, since the gangster had beaten her abusive husband to death. Quinto always nagged her about how much she charged, so in the end, He and only paid for the things she purchased, in effected, she'd paid-off the murder of her horrible husband. Quinto was also a cheapskate. For example, he paid the maid, who cleaned his home, an extremely low hourly wage, yet bragged to people how he spoiled her, and when it came time to tipping a waitress, he

would invariably have a complaint about the waitress's service, to justify his leaving a smaller tip. Whenever he went on a date, and took some woman to a restaurant, he'd try to get her to split a meal with him, and of course, he'd be the one to make the food selection.

In his youth, Quinto had been a soldier, but had been shot just above the ankle in a training accident, received an honorable discharge, but received no disability compensation, and had never gotten to be the combat hero, he'd envisioned himself becoming. Generally, he could run and jump on the injured leg, but some days he'd sport a slight limp. Once out of the military, he became the executioner for a Mexican drug lord. I found this out since I'd once gotten drunk with Quinto, once... only once. The anger the alcohol engendered was too much for me to comfortably deal with. We were at the bar, I excused myself to use the restroom, and left out the back of the bar, grabbed a cab, and abandoned him. Later, I told him I gotten sick. That was the only way to deal with Quinto, if he was going to drink heavily; you simply had to leave.

During that drinking bout at the bar, my well developed liver outclassed Quinto's, but my

magnitude of psychopathology didn't begin to rival his. As soon as he took that first long swallow of straight brown liquor, the psychopath began bubbling-up to the surface. It was only a matter of seconds. The facial changes were fast, unforgettable, and fearful. He started-out with sarcasm, and moved on to loathing. I nearly bought a pistol, because I thought, I was eventually going to have to kill him.

He had killed and tortured countless numbers of men, and a couple of women. He alleged that love had gotten to him once, but considering her high maintenance and legendary beauty, I think she was a just a show piece for him. He'd had married a Russian girl, who pretended she loved him, took a lot of his money, then left the country. For revenge, weird Quinto found a Russian prostitute, who looked like his wife, beat her and shot her, then dumped her body next to a highway, on the east side of MC. He was drunk and sneered and laughed, when he told me that miserable tidbit. I guess, killing the wife-look-a-like somehow made him feel better.

For Quinto, revenge was a pleasure, probably a sexual satisfaction, and the fulfillment of a need. It was the release of certain neurotransmitters in a disproportionally large piece of his gray matter.

Quinto's mind probably knew the definition of the word 'morality,' but wasn't the slightest bit concerned with it, since it was only a stumbling block in his road to happiness. He craved a commiserating spirit, and being a consummate liar, with his own touch of psychopathology, I sometimes filled the bill. That's why he liked me. Perhaps, I too look for parts of myself in my friends. Through the years, a disproportionate number of my friends have been similar to Quinto, yet none as dangerous. Nevertheless, I visited his home, but infrequently, but once he started drinking, I'd invent a reason to bail. My old aforementioned friend Andrew, who'd been the hit-man for the Mobile car dealer was just a paid killer, but Quinto was a few light years beyond Andrew, since undeniably Quinto loved torture and killing. Quinto always assumed I appreciated those needs of his, but only just a tad. Moreover, I honestly struggled to keep myself from becoming like Quinto. I too felt the tug of the dark side, but didn't want to really lose myself to it.

With the unpleasant day-to-day events we may adjust. By the same token, the more we experience the same beautiful and enchanting things, the more

we fail to appreciate them. Such habituation may not be the case for the psychopath, where violent deeds only drive the need for more violence.

Anatomy of Death by Dr. Adrian Yoel Williams

Outside of the roughly twenty-five square blocks of Tepito, few of the everyday people knew about the three kings. The kings liked their anonymity, and I was careful never to discuss anything, relating to them, with others, with the obvious exception of Esteban. Lord knows, I never wanted crazy Quinto to be pissed at me, and I enjoyed their trust. It was their selling me drugs, which allowed me to financially thrive in MC.

How can you tell if Mexican gangsters trust you? The answer is when there's hundreds of kilos of hard drugs in the building and everyone is stoned, yet they allow you to get closer to their loaded shotguns, than they are, while their guards are out of the building delivering supplies to Tepito's elderly friends. That happened during my sixth or seventh trip to the warehouse. I think the kings came to accept me for four reasons. The dealers had also been at odds with Knifeman's group and Esteban had leaked to Bicho my minor role, in eliminating

Knifeman. Second, there was something I did one night, while stoned out of my gourde, concerning yet another street gang, soon discussed, herein. Third, I was an American, who appeared to respect and not judge them, and most likely they'd never received deference from a gringo. Lastly, I became a significant buyer of their nonaddicting wares. In fact, when it came to hash, I was their biggest individual buyer; I say 'individual' in the since that I didn't employ other dealers, as I'd done in Mobile.

After several weeks, I was allowed free run of the tin warehouse. The first time, I went into the back rooms, Quinto proudly escorted me. Just like Andrew, the car dealers hitman in Mobile, had wanted to show me all the cocaine and the stacks of money in the car dealer's back offices. The few smaller rooms contained things like: saran wrapped and taped bricks of white cocaine and brown heroin, large two kilo round bricks of dark and blond aromatic hashish sealed in aluminum foil wraps, with a huge Asian symbol stamped in the top. There were large cardboard boxes filled with many smaller boxes and gallon sized plastic bottles, containing various pharmaceuticals, used to medically treat the residences of Tepito, especially the elderly; although,

some of the pharmaceuticals were for sale, i.e., mostly valium, codeine, morphine, percocet, and various types of speed, e.g., methamphetamine, dexedrine, and benzedrine. The pharmaceuticals which were for the health of the community's elderly were things like: antibiotics, warfarin, nitroglycerine, [pronethalol](#), laxatives, etc. Back then, there was no viagra, no beta blockers, and no ACE inhibitors, nor were there any of those costly Alzheimer's drugs, which don't work and have many bad side effects. One large room was half full of bails of compressed weed in heavily taped black plastic bags.

In addition, there were cardboard cases containing various types of blank bond paper, as well as drums and glass bottles of ink and other chemicals, used for counterfeiting. In another highly secure building, I meant the old men, uncharge of the counterfeiting, which was actually done in. A dusty old building just outside of Tepito. I'd give them a hand developing film and preparing their images, helping with the lithos, cutting the pages of print-outs, and making some deliveries within and outside of Mexico, without ever knowing the actual penalties if I got caught for transporting counterfeit passports, money, bonds, etc. Pound for pound, the fake bearer

bonds generated the greatest profit, perchance they were a bigger money maker than the drugs.

A very large safe in the three king's tin warehouse contained various amounts of various types of cash, gold and silver coin bullion, and countless bars and dome-disc shaped pieces of gold, some extraneous jewelry, and a few loaded pistols. Make no mistake, in third world cities, the richest spot is frequently in the ghetto. On one wall was a green wooden gun rack like you might find in an old fashioned military armory, with two machine guns (Mendoza RM-2s, $7.62 \times 63\text{mm}$), which looked like they'd never been used. There were also the two aforementioned shotguns, and a scoped bolt action hunting rifle, and in one corner were a few cases of ammunition, as well as a few wooden cases of dynamite, with the words Red Diamond stenciled on the sides.

There were other unexpected sundry items: supplies for nursing homes, a dozen small oxygen tanks, a few hospital beds, and drums of various types of cleaning supplies, bedpans, blood pressure cuffs, etc. Oddly enough, there were a few ancient archeological artifacts, which I suspected were either stolen or fake. There was a large rack of men's suits.

Behind the building was a shipping container, filled with TVs and stereos still in their individual boxes. In a smaller tin shed, there were caskets, embalming fluids, blank tombstones, etc. There was a hurst parked behind the warehouse, which frequently carried bodies to the twenty or so cemeteries in Mexico City. Now and then, the hurst was also used to transport shipments of illegal drugs, black market meds, documents, etc.

The actual embalming was done in the basement of a small apartment building, by a deaf mute, who'd only recently gotten out of prison. A fairly attractive young mixed woman did the make-up and hair of the deceased. The funeral home services and elderly care businesses operated at a financial loss, but those services accorded the three kings considerable respect and power, in their community. No one in Tepito died without a first rate funeral, and funerals are a huge part of the black Mexican Catholic culture. Incongruently, Quinto was not only the judicial whip, the executioner, the elderly medical care facilitator, but he was also the funeral director. Quinto could have put together an amazing resume. One of Quinto's most memorable comments was than, 'Life and death are all part of the same thing.'

Quinto didn't believe in God, but went to church.

For anatomical reasons, the hearing impaired silent embalmer, as well as Bicho were quite popular at the random orgies. The embalmer seemed to take pride in such notoriety, whereas Bicho didn't. The orgies included the spectrum of drugs and liquors, as well as the quintessential gamut of humanity: the beautiful and the not so beautiful, politicians, teachers, criminals, the rich, the poor, artists, business folks, morons, and geniuses. Sex comes in more varieties than snowflakes, and can cross social and cultural boundaries faster than an SR-71, in full afterburner.

A portion of the first floor of the enormous warehouse had once been a makeshift restaurant. Just the bottom floor was about fifteen thousand square feet. The three black kings had the lunch counter, the bathrooms, the big kitchen, all the dining booths and tables and chairs removed. That left a giant squarish hundred by hundred foot room. Many of the interior support walls had been knocked-out, and thick vertical I-beams and massive timbers were installed in between the ceiling joists and the concrete floor. This ten thousand square foot room was used, solely to host the ever popular boxing

matches. It was freshly painted, wiring and overhead lighting had been installed, and cracks in the concrete floor were repaired. Quinto often mentioned that earthquakes had cracked the floor, as if he greatly feared the next quake. Most people fear what is beyond their control, and is life threatening. Perhaps, Quinto thought the earth would swallow him up, and he'd fall straight down into hell. For the parties/orgies concert speakers were brought in along with musicians and lots of comfortable furniture. The guests ascended two different sets of backstairs to get to the restrooms. The only thing the huge room still needed was a ventilation system. The benefit to the poor ventilation was that during the parties you'd get high from the second-hand weed smoke, and receive a relaxing secondhand tobacco buzz, during the boxing matches.

Somehow it seemed appropriate that the three king's parties and businesses were carried-out on a patched cracked concrete foundation, for in a way, that made them seem all the more successful. The entire sprawling city was tenuously constructed on an ever sinking ancient lake bed, which was above a huge overactive fault line. The city was constantly pumping-up the water for public consumption, hence

the sinking of the city, and tilting buildings. *One day, there's not going to be enough water for MC... too many people.* They'll have to pipe it in. Even so, MC has outlasted every American city. It was first founded by the Aztecs in 1325. Perhaps, contrary to popular belief, a shaky foundation is the key to a lasting city; it makes people fight for survival.

In the middle of the floor was the elevated boxing ring, a square plywood platform, sixteen feet by sixteen feet, built-up three feet up off the concrete slab. The platform had four thick padded posts, sticking-up above the four corners, with three thick ropes, running between all four corner posts. The ropes were wrapped with dirty white tape, about a foot and a half apart. The corner posts were padded by dense black foam rubber, held in place, again by the very same dirty white tape, and before every big event a new layer of tape would be applied. For parties, the ropes and corner posts were removed and the floor of the ring was used as a stage for bands.

Boxing was tremendously popular in Tepito, much as bullfighting had been in Spain. While in Mexico City, I attended a few bullfights, but never saw any of the unusual things, which I'd witnessed in Spain. Moreover, the bullring and stadium seemed

larger, and so the event appeared less personal. Where my Mother had loathed the bullfights, not surprisingly Rosa loved them. When it comes to blood and violence, there are only two classes of people: those who love it, and those who hate it, few if any people are centralists, when it comes to the bright red stuff.

Every Friday night was boxing, from ten p.m. to roughly four a.m., the place was always packed, and there was lots of betting on the boxers and the outcome of the fight: how many rounds the fight would go, would it be a spit or unanimous decision, an actual knockout or a TKO, etc. The bets would be flying. Oft times, the betting resulted in loud disagreements and sometimes fights amongst the spectators. The boxers varied widely in: weight, talent, age, race, aggressiveness, athleticism, technique, even education. Most of the fights were between well known boxers of Mexico, Central, and South America. If a young man wanted to become a fighter, almost anyone could finagle a way into the ring. To settle certain disputes where the arguing parties seemed fairly matched, Quinto would encourage them to slug it out in the ring, to settle things, and that usually did the trick... enemies

became instant friends. Those grudge matches were usually only one round, but they were bareknuckle. Quinto loved the grudge matches, because there was some form of true hate in the game. Once a grudge fighter went down the match was over, even if he got right back to his feet. That way, not too much time was wasted on the low quality grudge fights. For the more professional and amateur fights, the match-ups were based on bodyweight and talent. Also, not unlike Judge LeGroin in Mobile, men who'd been too abusive to their girlfriends or wives would find themselves in the ring, matched-up against some vastly superior opponent, who'd been selected by Quinto, to be the punisher.

During those boxing matches, the referee was sometimes the sadistic Quinto, who could be a bit too slow on stopping a fight. Two deaths had occurred in the ring, and both had been grudge matches, which unlike other grudge match had been allowed to continue after the knockdown. Quinto has insisted the beaten man repeatedly get back to his feet. I witness neither of those matches, but suspected that Quinto was to blame for not stopping the fight in a timely fashion. Never allow a sadist to become a boxing referee. In both deaths, they were knockouts

from which the victims never awoke.

I don't know how anyone could have boxed in that stuffy room, packed with people, and about half of them were smoking. Furthermore, Mexico City was a mile high. Consequently, there was little useable oxygen. The smoky low-oxygen air couldn't have been to good for the fighters' endurance. Perhaps, that was why many of the fights didn't go the distance. Black Quinto also showed a slight racial bias in favor of the black fighters, so he was the principal reason why a few of the more seasoned lighter skinned Latino fighters steered clear of fighting in Tepito. Many fight promoters and managers demanded that Quinto not be the referee. Still, many boxers, from outside the city, liked to fight at Tepito, because they could win more money. Other boxing rings in MC only gave amateur fighters a small fee, which frequently failed to cover their post-fight doctoring costs. The square ring in Tepito was a place where a tough determined beginner could made a good chunk of change, and twice as much, if he won the match. Moreover, if a fighter showed exceptional heart, the three kings had been known to offer-up a very generous reward.

The fights were generally five three-minute

rounds, unless it was an important fight, meaning that actual pros were fighting, and then it might go on for ten to twelve rounds. There was a one minute rest period between each round. A twelve round fight only happened about once every six months. The judges were always the three kings, with each round being scored by them alone. However, the referee could recommend that a point be deducted, for: excessive holding, head-butts, kidney punches, low blows, rabbit punches, punching after the bell, eye thumbing, etc. Each round was ten points. If a boxer got knocked down he'd lose a point, and so the score for the round could be 10-9, in favor of the boxer, who knocked the other down. If that boxer got knocked down twice, then the round was 10-8. If a boxer was completely dominated but not knocked down, during a round, he could still lose two points. If the round was scored even, both fighters would usually get ten points.

Personally, while I liked watching the fights, I found attending the fights to be unpleasant, simply because there were way too many people packed into the room, and there weren't enough chairs, whence a lot of attendees stood, between the back row of chairs and the walls. While I don't have

claustrophobia, and I do enjoy boxing, I don't like being packed in a stale smoky room like a sardine. The early fights were the grudge matches, and the best fights were for held last. Once there was a stabbing in the audience, during a fight. The victim didn't die. The stabbing resulted in Quinto later administering a severe public beating to the attacker. During the beating, Quinto knocked the guy to the ground, then kicked-out most of his teeth.

Over the months, I frequently rode around with the three black Mexican gangsters. They traveled in a distinctive old checker taxi cab, completely customized, and in impeccable condition, yet it was not a gaudy or flashy ride, as you might think that black American gangsters might prefer. The interior had been reupholstered with thick black leather, and the carpeting was black, as well. The vehicle was repainted red and black; instead of the original yellow black and white, but still, the vehicle had the original checker board pattern, down the sides. The inside was extremely comfortable and roomy, and the car still had the reverse drop-seats on the floor in the back.

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An older aforementioned black Mexican woman, Amparo, acted as the three kings' chauffeur and bodyguard. She was armed with two pistols: one, in a holster, which was permanently riveted up under the dash, next to the steering column. The second pistol she carried in a shoulder holster up under her left arm, beneath a loose fitting light weight bolero-type jacket. From a glance, you could tell Amparo was a woman of few words. She was hard as nails, ever vigilante, and strictly business. In bearing, she was a regular soldier, had a decent lean muscular figure, but not too attractive in the face. She had a hard flinty eagle-like gaze. She was deadly, but unlike Quinto, she was not a sadist. In the sack she was

feminine, enthusiastic, and unexpectedly she was slightly masochistic, yet not over the top. She had no problem telling me what she liked. Oddly, none of the three kings had slept with her. She refused to attend the orgies.

Whenever the three kings and I would get stoned, Amparo would drive us around, and keep an eye-out for trouble. She'd spent ten years in prison for killing her husband. Bicho mentioned, the husband had a bad temper and had been known to severely beat Amparo. Because of the beatings, the judge and jury weren't too upset that she'd killed him, yet the way she killed him is what was alleged to have gotten her the ten years. Evidently, there are two abundant things in southwestern Mexico: volcanoes and black widow spiders. Correspondingly, black widows like to inhabit lava rocks. Using a pair of long tweezers, Amparo had carefully collected four or five dozen of the small shiny black patent leather female creatures in jars. She killed them by dropping in a small piece of cloth soaked with nail polish remover, then using two pair of tweezers she'd pulled off the spider's heads, which contain the poison glands, filled with the deadly neurotoxin; the venom has been found to contain five insecticidal toxins,

termed α , β , γ , δ and ε -latroinsectotoxins. Amparo crushed-up the poison-containing heads, and stirred the toxic substance in her evil husband's tacos. When he came home drunk and hungry, she fed him. As an apology for the manner in which she'd killed him, Amparo told the judge that she would have shot him, but her husband had sold her rifle to buy his tequila. Amparo's father had given her that rifle when she was a girl, and had taught her to hunt with it. At the age of thirteen, she'd killed a black jaguar, while hunting alone in the mountains at sunset. She still had the beautiful supple well tanned jet black hide, and kept it draped over the back of the front seat of the checker cab, in memory of her dad. Her aunt had kept the jaguar hide, while Amparo was in prison. Shooting a charging jaguar with a rifle was probably no easy task. Those animals are extremely fast when charging. Amparo showed me the bullet hole in the head portion of the soft thick pelt. It wasn't dead center but it was close.

Driving around, we'd usually smoke soft blond hash mixed with some rather moist ropery tobacco, stuffed into a large ornate darkly stained meerschaum pipe, carved to look like an angry baboon's head with exaggerated long fangs. The top

of the pipe was black from previous smoking, then the color transitioned into a dark brown, then to a lighter brown, and the base of the beautiful pipe and its stem were still a creamy white. Aimon would carefully prepare each bowl, and called the well rehearsed manual ritual... 'stuffing the monkey.' A lot of dopers are extremely ceremonious in how they do their drugs, as if there is something sacred about their drug... almost as if such is a religious ritual. Science is the only human endeavor where perhaps complexity is justified, for it is created to study the complexities of nature, and the universe. Too many folks take comfort in their rituals and ceremonies: chants, songs, incenses, smoke, prayers, sermons, injecting themselves, inhaling their drug, swallowing their pills, drinking their favorite form of alcohol, etc., to better foster their beliefs, to deal with life's problems, or just to elevate the dopamine levels in their brain.

The hash-tobacco combination high was great. The mixture was a very heavy relaxing stone. Mainly, the five of us just got into listening to radio music, where there were very long comfortable silences, punctuated with heavy eye lids. The three kings and Amparo spared me from having to listen to mariachi

music. For me and for most people, hash is a far heavier stone than weed. It's not too different from opium, but much safer, since it's nonaddictive. From having smoked both weed and hash, I'd say that there is a chance that the hash would be a much better pain killer, than medical marijuana. The high is also less confusing than weed. At least it was like that for me. While the only thing that matters in life is the good you do, it is important to also occasionally enjoy life. All work and no play makes...

Quinto had an uncomfortable habit of continually touching the pistol he carried in his leather-lined front jacket pocket, while he'd smile at people, simply because he enjoyed making them nervous. But after a few times, I trained myself to ignore his ploy, then he stopped touching the gun. Maybe the touching of his gun was considered a from of gangster humor. It wasn't hard to tell that Quinto was the homicidal manic of the group. Indirectly, the group made it clear that Quinto handled the wet work. According to Aimon, Quito killed someone about every three or four months. The drug trade involved many types of people, some quite unpleasant, and in need of a bullet. While Quito was a killer, he was also the most insecure of the three,

hence his need for constant recognition. Bicho said that Quito was only good to old people to make-up for the fact that he had neglected his own mother, during the last two years of her life; only visiting her only once a month, while telling everyone how much he loved her, and that he was a dutiful son. She lived in Toluca, only a half hour drive to the West, but it was Quinto's sister, who'd actually cared for their mother, and when the woman finally was placed in a nursing home, it was Quinto's brother, a doctor, who'd paid for her care, even though Quinto was extremely well off.

Quinto also abandoned his own kids, claiming they were undisciplined and that he had tried to raise them right, but that their mother had ruined them. He'd tell everyone who'd listen that she was a whore, having sex with random men behind his back. None of that was true. Both Bicho and Aimon knew her and the kids, and said they all were good people. Sociopaths are such good liars that at times they literally succeed in convincing themselves, or at the very least, they convince themselves that others believe their never ending barrage of lies.

Some religious believers are not too different, believing themselves to be true believers, but really

only wanting that one way ticket to paradise, and to make a ton of money in the process. More interestingly, sometimes there may exist believers, who don't know they believe. The human mind can be extremely proficient in multiple forms of deceit. It can be difficult to say who's the more courageous, the supposed believer who looks forward to an eternity of happiness, or the admitted non-believer who faces the possibility of burning eternally, because he or she has remained honest with themselves. Perhaps the neuronal composition of belief exists somewhere outside the realm of choice, if there is even such a thing.

Aside from when he was dealing with the elderly, or with the other two kings, Quinto had the social graces of a chainsaw. Allegedly, Quinto had once been torturing some fellow, who'd managed to steal one of the three king's shipments of counterfeit Columbian bills. During the interrogation in an attempt to recover the money, Quinto spontaneously decided to cut the man's ear off. After the man's screams died down a bit, Quinto threatened to cut the second ear off, if the unfortunate guy didn't agree to eat the first ear. The man only lost one ear, having eaten his crunchy cartilaginous ear; thusly, Quinto

successfully recovered the stolen counterfeit currency.

He let the man think he was going to release him, but instead killed him, mercifully shooting him in the back of his head. Quinto joked that he first thought about cutting the man's tongue out, but then realized that the guy would have trouble telling him where he'd hidden the stolen merchandize, without a tongue. Quinto also mentioned that he didn't want to risk being bitten.

"Trying to cut-out his tongue could be hazardous to my fingers." Quinto jested.

In a more dramatic case, he had removed one intransigent fellow's eye with a spoon. Quinto had sharpened the edge of the utensil on a bench-grinder, solely for that purpose. He kept the nondescript sharpened spoon on the mantelpiece in his home, as a souvenir of sorts. Quinto said that he'd learned his lesson about using an unsharpened spoon. During a prior effort to remove an eye, he found that a dull spoon won't cut through the muscles and optic nerve.

"What's this spoon doing above your fireplace, Quinto?" I'd asked.

"That little spoon was just right for the job,

Joey... Ha, ha, ha... The thieving bastard was a big screamer!” Quinto said, then he confided all the details of his torture-murder, while laughing.

Like I said, if a person is capable of committing serious violence, while stoned on weed, they’re truly someone to be feared. One time, when I was alone with Aimon and Bicho, they told me that although Quinto enjoyed torturing and killing people, when it came to street brawling, he was actually a bit of a coward. I’ve meant others like that. They may be quick with a weapon, but will avoid a fist fight, at all cost. Go figure that one out. Quinto would have been great at performing the shooting part of combat, but might not have made it through my military high school, where fights were a frequent occurrence. Albeit intelligent, Quinto had not gotten beyond the fourth year of elementary school. Nevertheless, he was an avid reader. He preferred crime novels, and adventure stories.

The three kings didn’t always seek revenge; anything less than roughly \$500 was routinely a reason to only terminate future business, without seeking retribution. If the crime was in excess of \$500, the punishment varied in accordance with the amount and circumstances. The punishment ran the

gamut from a simple fine, to banishment from Tepito or from all of MC, or a beating (public or private, whip, fists, or ax handle), various degrees of torture, as well as amputations (usually just fingers), or an execution.

Execution or severe torture was for anything over \$10,000. The three kings discussed each case, then judiciously voted on the punishment. The debate was often Aimon and Bicho, trying to restrain Quinto. Their two downstairs bodyguards occasionally carried-out the punishment, if it was collecting a fine or a minor public beating. Anything more harsh became Quinto's dark domain. Somewhere in Quinto's ancestry may have been one of those celebrated psychopathic Aztec's, which the highly knowledgeable little man at the museum had told me about.

During one outing, Amparo drove the four of us to a small café for an espresso, just outside the edge of the Tepito district. The coffee shop/cafe was owned by the three kings. The reason that Bicho preferred the shop was that that the cafe used an actual brass, turn-of-the-century, espresso machine, which Bicho had brought back with him from a trip to Italy. The beverage was so strong that the first sip

was a nightmare of acid-tipped bitterness, but the buzz was pleasurably potent, and so the rich blend grew on me. Albeit a childhood alcoholic, my only true life-long addictions, are sex and caffeine, and maybe, I have a minor problem with adrenaline. Now as a senior citizen, I never consume more than two cups of coffee per day, and usually just one. As you get older, your liver becomes less proficient at breaking down the caffeine molecule. Consequently, a little bit of coffee a long way. Caffeine is metabolized in the liver by the cytochrome P450 oxidase enzyme system, and primarily by the CYP1A2 isozyme, which older folks often make less of. Consequently, if you are over sixty, drinking one cup of coffee can be like drinking three or four cups as a young adult, and cause problems with dehydration, and blood pressure.

After the coffee arrived at the table, while literally licking his lips, Bicho pulled-out a small brown glass bottle, unscrewed the black plastic cap, and banged the mouth of the bottle into his open palm to dislodge one of a couple dozen extremely sticky dark brown balls of pure raw. Each coffee-colored ball was about the size of an English pea. He then pulled out a flask and poured-in about two shots

of brandy. Bicho justified his narcotic use, by saying that the opium was much less potent in the hot coffee and brandy, compared to smoking it. *Maybe so, maybe not...*

Normally, addicts smoke the sticky black Buddha, and there were more than a few places in MC, where one could pay a fee for a comfortable sleeping mat, or little low bed with an ultra thin mattress, and a pipe, to smoke those costly little sticky brown balls. The long stemmed pipe, had a ceramic bowl, and a metal fitting, which the locals called the 'saddle,' or 'sillen.' One opium dispensing place was a nearby abandoned hospital. Each tiny room had two matts, and the wards had twenty to thirty rows of mats, with makeshift partitions separating the smoking mats. The partitions were old rugs, bedspreads, or other pieces of heavy cloth. Nails were driven in the opposing walls, and clotheslines were stretched across the room. The various cloth partitions were simply hung over the clotheslines. The opium negates concern for style or esthetics, as well as many other things, which people might consider prerequisites for being human: love, fear, empathy, excitement, curiosity, desire, etc.

When you'd checked-in with the proprietor, you

would tell him, how long you wanted to stay, when you want food and drink brought to you, and when to literally throw you out. That latter factor was critical. Of course, clients paid upfront. The sheriff got half the profits from the opium houses. Some Americans traveled to MC, solely to visit their favorite opium den, which was half a step shy of a shooting gallery, but without the associated muggings. Once I had to go in there with Aimon, to help retrieve the deaf mute embalmer. No one can bitch like an opium addict, who's been pulled out of the opium house, before they've finished smoking what's in his pipe! Had Aimon allowed him to finish, it would have been hours before he could do his job.

“His soul will rot, long before he dies. So there will be nothing left, to venture forth into the unknown.” Aimon commented.

At the cafe, Quinto and Aimon wrinkled their faces, expressing their disapproval of the Bicho's opium use. Bicho grinned and gave them the middle finger, and since the finger is more of an American gesture, Bicho smiled at me, when he made the gesture. Years later, I'd see that same look of disapproval on the face of a black pimp, if someone

used hard drugs in his presence. Those three kings of Tepito moved a variety of drugs, the opium came from the Santiago District on the western coast of Panama, where it had arrived on a Kach Kong Cambodian freighter, having originally come from the Phongsali province of Laos. There was no drug searches, by the Mexican authorities, and everyone on the freighter used drugs, including the captain. As mentioned, the hash also came from Laos. Some of the opium poppies were homegrown in El Durazno, Mexico.

Most of the Laotian, as well as the Mexican, opium were converted into heroin at a lab on the outskirts of MC, which kept a quarter of the heroin, for their processing fee. That which wasn't converted into heroin was sold to the aforementioned opium dens, and of course, a smidgen found its way into Bicho's little brown bottle. Quinto frequently expressed irritation at the twenty-five percent processing fee. The other three quarters of the heroin was owned, and sold by Bicho, Quinto, and Aimon, and most of that was sold to dealers in various other Mexican cities. The ganja came from several private farms, within Mexico. Much of the weed came from the copper canyon area, a group of six separate

canyons in the Sierra Madre Occidental in Chihuahua. The cocaine was brought in by a business acquaintance, who I never meant. He ran a lab in the jungle near the Atrato River in northern Columbia. Oddly enough, that lab also made meth, since it was safer to make meth out in the jungle, than in the city. All three of the black kings were convinced that said acquaintance was insane and extremely dangerous, and so they only dealt with him, by using a go-between. Quinto would have killed him, if it wasn't for the fact that he made them lots of money.

My affiliation with the three kings occurred the very same year that Pablo Escobar was just getting started; the year he started flying cocaine from Columbia to Panama, in his little put-put of a plane, a *Piper*, thus beginning the Medellin Cartel. When he became the richest drug dealer in history, he had the small plane mounted on top of the gate, leading into his ranch. At its height of success, his cartel would be making half a billion a year, and eventually he'd be shot, while trying to escape, across a rooftop, in his home town of Medellín, Colombia.

The three kings had heard of Pablo, but didn't deal with him; at least, not when I knew them. As a stab at humor, or possibly as a justification for

dealing cocaine, Pablo started bottling Coca-cola, and putting cocaine in the drink, just as the cola company had originally made the cola. In 1906, the Coca-cola slogan was, “The Great National Temperance Beverage.” It was supposed to reflect US society steering away from alcoholic beverages, and Coca-Cola was a ‘nice’ alternative... cocaine instead of alcohol. Drinking cocaine-laced cola was probably less addicting and damaging to the body, than is whiskey.

Symbolically, Pablo started his business career as a little kid, stealing grave stones, sanding the names off and then reselling them. That strange way of making money reminded me of something that Tommy, the gym gigolo, might have done. As you may recall, Tommy was the guy who played the trick on beautiful Francine, with the gruesome human head, at the health club, where I’d worked seven years before.

If I had stayed in MC long enough, it was Bicho’s intention to take me around to all the various places, where they obtained their drugs, and I was to become their liaison. He had decided to introduce me to various people, and for me to help him plan shipments and make deliveries. It would have been a

lucrative job, but not without risks. In addition, he wanted us to fly to Laos, via Japan, and try to secure better deals on the heroin and hash... possibly find another source. There was no telling how risky that would have been. I was later given an extremely convincing counterfeit passport, under the name of Vincenzo Perugia, and while I did fly in and out of Mexico, I never opted for the trip to the orient. Planning the deliveries and shipments was a creative, yet practical, endeavor, since you were always having to worry about armed thieves, and the Mexican government, who if they got the drugs, would simply sell them back to another dealer, after first getting the media coverage for making the bust. \$100,000 worth of some drug would be aligned to be about \$100,000,000, on the bogus Mexican news. But the public and the cops know it's all a political hoax. The same thing is done in America. The cops also liked to have the captured guns shown in the same broadcast, but I know private individuals who own more guns than are put on display for those cameras. The reporters are invited to photograph the huge stash, and weapons, and once the articles are published in the newspapers and magazines, then the drugs are sold to the highest drug bidders (drug dealers). The cops usually distribute the guns

amongst the most senior cops. At times, as subterfuge, a huge bonfire would be lit, and the press would be invited. Packages, bundles, and bales of various kinds of illegal drugs would be filmed being tossed into the roaring flames, only most of those packages, bundles, and bales weren't actually drugs.

Shipping drugs required creative innovation. Sometimes, if a huge shipment was planned, the three kings would leak the information about a very small shipment, to distract potential authorities and other assorted crooks. New guys would be employed to take the fall, and since they had no record, they served little or no time. Their families would be well compensated. A few years after I was there, cocaine would flood the Mexican and American markets, and most likely the three black kings, would strictly deal the profitable white powder. They had major distributors in three other cities: Guadalajara, Vera Cruz, and Acapulco. As stated, the three black kings were into several different drugs, as well as several other things besides drugs.

Although an opiate user, Bicho was clearly the thinker of the three, and oddly enough he seemed to be fairly creative, even when on the narcotic

beverage. Perhaps because he only did small doses. For example, while stoned on the opium, hash, and tobacco, he came-up with the idea, of using some of the corpses, of their aforementioned funeral business, in which to hide the drugs. Sitting in the cafe, Quinto pulled-out a pack of American *Camel Cigarettes*, with the well known drawing of a camel on the packaging, which caused Bicho to think about the mummies in Egypt, which then gave him the idea of using the bodies to transport the drugs. And so, he joked and said he'd gotten the idea from the ancient Egyptians. The idea was ingeniously simple. At first, a long quarter inch bit was used to drill up through the cribriform plate (roof of nasal cavity), through the dura mater (the covering of the brain) of the perfused cadaver. A small steel tube was inserted into the brain, and a strong soapy solution was pumped in, and then a vacuum pump was attached and the brain and the solution was sucked out. This was repeated a few times. Next, the inside of the hollow skull was rinsed-out with a flush out with hydrogen peroxide, and then with alcohol. Lastly, for ten minutes air was pumped into the clean sterilized cavity, to thoroughly dry it. Once the cranium was thus prepared, via the same tube the skull was finally filled with cocaine. Last, a pliable tiny piece of brick

colored clay was packed up the nose to plug the small drilled hole, in the roof of the nasal cavity. Another technique was for the cadaver to first receive a few large enemas to clean-out any waste from their colon, then well lubricated drug-filled balloons were pushed-up the rectum, filling the colon. The latter technique came to be the easiest and the preferred technique.

The person receiving the cadaver would be listed as the next-of-kin at the destination, and so cleared to pick-up their dead relative. Rail officials generally volunteered to help unload the cheap coffin. The receiver usually possessed a phony ID card, or one made by the Tepito counterfeiters. The papers accompanying the drug laden corpse would have the same last name, as did the ID card of the receiver. The Tepito counterfeiters would also print-up an appropriate death certificate, with the forged signature of the city's coroner. In those days, the family was actually allowed to take direct possession of their loved-one's corpse, from the train. Now days, bodies are the purview of hospitals, morgues, funeral homes, and the graveyards. Now days, I don't know if you could actually take your dead relative's body, and bury it on your own land.

Once the body was in the hands of the receiver, and safely hidden, the skull was opened and the cocaine removed, and/or the abdominal cavity was opened and the colon removed. The actual body, once the head and/or abdomen had been opened and emptied of drugs, was either taken to a crematorium, or sometimes it was buried at night, somewhere out in the countryside. The bodies were procured from the MC's morgue. Every time a fresh unclaimed 'John Doe' came into the morgue, Mexico City's greedy medical examiner would call Aimon, who would then dispatch the Tepito hurst to go pick it up. The unclaimed body was only \$10. Years later, I heard of other drug dealers also using Bicho's idea.

Though Bicho's technique was effective, it only allowed for the safe movement of limited amounts of cocaine. As mentioned, I had a few contributions, as well. One was to copy and print new books, or make blank paged diaries for apparent sale, using thick highly absorbent bond paper, which had been soaked in solutions of LSD, mescaline, or psilocybin, Afterwards the pages were allowed to dry, then the diaries books were bound. Later the pages could be cut into individual doses, with a quarter inch square, representing a single dose. Another idea was to alter

a few cylinders in the diesel engines of giant used tractors, so that certain of the cylinders, without their pistons and rods, were sealable with machined large screw-on steel caps, resembling the top of a piston. Each cap on the top and the bottom of the cylinder were threaded. One cap was screwed-in at the bottom of the cylinder near the crankshaft, and the other was screwed-in at the top of the cylinder, with the drug in between the two caps. The trick was to find used tractors with large cylinders. If the engine head was removed for inspection, it would appear appropriate. The great thing about that technique, was that the engines could still run, just minus the horsepower normally supplied by the drug-containing cylinders. They were shipped on flatbed trucks, flatbed railroad cars, and onboard ships. Before shipping the engines were well coated in grimy carbonized sulfur-treated grease, which really stunk, to discourage investigation. These big tractors were used over and over, sometimes getting new paint jobs and identification numbers. They were easy to ship, into and out of the country. The authorities didn't tend to inspect used farm equipment. The tractors brought cocaine in from Columbia to Acapulco or Puerto Vallarta, then loaded onto a flat bed, they were driven to a farm just

outside MC, and on the return journey the specially designed tractors transported the bricks of hash, heroin, and/or cash to Columbia.

Aimon was the *charge de affaires* of the group. He was the consummate mediator and diplomat. He was intelligent, and well spoken. He didn't use drugs like Bicho, and wasn't insane like Quinto. Aimon, didn't even curse. The group was an unusual three-way symbiosis of Bicho's intelligence and creativity, Aimon's finesse and practicality, and Quinto's psychopathology, which apparently worked for them. The imaginative Bicho, and business like Aimon, kept their illegal trades moving. But when something went wrong, Quinto was thereby furnished an outlet for his darker needs, while eliminating the business problem for Bicho and Aimon. All of this benefitted the entire black community. Aimon kept Bicho and Quinto from over reacting, and handled most of the boring day-to-day business, especially the paper work for the legal businesses. Though vastly different, each man seemed to respect the other. Aimon, who looked a bit like Gene Hackman, was known to frequently start-out his suggestions with a phrase like,

“Before we do something extreme, which might come back to bite us in the butt, let's just try to talk

about things calmly. We need to think this through, before committing to anything, and at this point there's no hurry, so what are our options, here?"

The ever volatile Quinto referred to cops as 'targets.' In private, Bicho made it clear to me that Quinto had killed at least three police officers, which were probably more sinister than most dangerous criminals. While Quinto carried a cheap double barrel shotgun at the huge tin warehouse, he was known to use various other weapons. For long range, he preferred an old 7.62 mm Mauser, with a rather narrow old-fashioned scope, which he kept at his house. For up close work, Quinto used an Obregon .45 automatic pistol, which he usually carried loose in his front coat pocket and sometimes in a shoulder holster. It was the aforementioned pistol, which he liked to touch to intimidate folks. The large corduroy barn coat pocket, in which he carried the pistol, had been lined with heavy suede, to protect it from wear. He wore the coat even in the summer, just so he could carry the pistol. There was little doubt that Quinto had more than his share of enemies.

These were not highly sophisticated weapons, but Quinto had been using them for over twenty-five years, and so was highly proficient and comfortable

with them. While he had many other weapons, he rarely shot them. The way I looked at it, Quinto was lucky to be alive. One doesn't kill large numbers of people without incurring someone's wrath. Periodically, he'd have his regular weapons reworked, and refitted with replacement parts: barrels, springs, firing pins, etc. When you find a gun you're good with, it's hard to switch, if not foolish; the same often goes for the bullets and powder loads. Once you've grown accustomed to a certain recoil, you don't want a different one... no surprises.

Quinto owned many other weapons, but he told me that they had been a complete waste of money. They were just guns, that at the time, he had thought he might like, but after a little use, he lost interest in them. They were scattered all over his house; on the book case, on shelves, on the kitchen counter, on the coffee table, in his car. He even slept with two guns in his bed, one on either side of him. One of the many bedrooms in his home was a reloading room, and most of those unused guns stood propped-up along the walls of the room. They just sat there, never to be used. Quinto was a creature of grim habits. He always made his loads the same for the 12 gauge, the 7.62 mm, and the .45 pistol rounds.

Moreover, he always used the same brass casings, bullets, types and amounts of powder, and the same primers. The zen of shooting and killing function smoothly with unknowns.

Once the sticky dark brown ball of opium was out of the brown jar, Bicho would lightly roll the soft gummy plasticine substance between his thumb and index finger, then gently squeezed it, smashing it out into a paper thin nickel-sized wafer. He'd then drop it into the steaming hot coffee, add the brandy, and patiently stir. Like I said, drug users love their doltish rituals. Bicho claimed it made 'the coffee bitter, but so much sweeter.' *He thinks that stupid saying is so clever.* Bicho was forever trying to bait me into trying it, but I wasn't about to. I simply expressed an air of nonjudgemental disinterest. I'd smoked opium once in my life, and while it was extremely pleasant, it was devastatingly mind numbing, like a euphoric mellow death, and that wasn't for me. It meant giving-up cogent thought just to feel great. In my mind, it was a bad trade, even without the addiction potential.

Oddly enough, Aimon and Quinto confirmed that Bicho had been doing his afternoon opium coffee for years, without apparently upping his dosage. As he

lazily scraped the spoon back and forth in the jet-powered doctored espresso, Bicho looked at me and explained that flattening the opium made it dissolve quicker, as if that rather obvious elementary fact, was the wisdom of the ages. Indeed, he was in love with his little habit. After years of doing the daily dose, the dopamine neuron tracks of his brain probably didn't work so well without it. Bicho was always saying things to make his addiction sound mysterious and magical.

No one tries as hard as an addict to make an evil seem good.

Climbing the Stairs to Hell by William Roy
Meller

"A farmer cuts those magical poppies, so they can cry their brown tears in my espresso. Some people have wine in the evening, I prefer a sip of mild narcotic. There's no real difference. It all depends on your culture." Bicho said, as justification. *What wisdom, Einstein!*

Of course, in the greater scope of things, perhaps Einstein's theory isn't that big a deal, either. On the

other hand, that field equation seems to explain most of the behavior of the universe. Too many drug users have their own form of puerile pseudo-intellectualism. Alcoholics and weed smokers are probably the worst of the lot. Few alcoholics realize how much damage alcohol does to their body, and some weed smokers believe that weed can cure just about any illness: shingles, lyme disease, cancer, broken bones, certainly every form of mental illness, relieve every pain, etc. Most addicts spend half their sobriety talking about their addiction. Some wine connoisseurs are just as bad as weed smokers. Just how important is it that you can taste various flavors in wine? Why is that such a big deal! Look at how much talk and money is devoted to wine, which when it's all said and done, is nothing more than fermented grape juice. Sure certain wines taste better than others, but is it really such a big deal? Just like certain coffees taste better than others, but so what? Alcohol, cocaine, amphetamine, and heroin users are most prone to addiction and physiological damage. Alcohol causes the most damage to the body and produces the most dangerous withdrawals, yet it's legal. Fentanyl is most like to overdose you.

Often I think that the primary purpose of NA and

AA is to subconsciously provide the addict with another form of entertainment, which better insures their self-importance and their recidivism. How useful can it be to constantly be associating with other addicts, talking about the one thing that you're supposed to be getting away from? When you're at a NA or AA meeting you're in a room full of triggers, listening to ridiculous verbiage, also filled with triggers. Certainly other addicts, talking about their Holy of Holies, their blessed addiction, have to be something of a major trigger, and if so, NA and AA meetings are one giant trigger, and assurance of self-importance. Then after enough time, even the meeting room itself must become something of a trigger. Why not just have the one support person, the one sponsor? But that's probably not enough attention for the addict? And with those last few sentences, perchance I've turned-off many readers of these dubious texts, since there are an abundance of intelligent, but highly self-deluded, NA and AA members.

Politely, I just nodded to Bicho, as if I'd been properly enlightened, by his comment. *Why do these three guys have such power? Simply because they can kill?* Even after the disapproving looks from Quinto,

Bicho still offered the bottle to us, and we all politely turned it down. Besides, I was never big on doing multiple drugs (caffeine-opium-alcohol), especially addicting drugs. The most damaging drug I did was the alcohol of my childhood, with its four years of post-withdrawal suicidal depression. It's too easy to lose yourself to addiction. Having seen too many destroyed narcotic addicts, I've never wanted to be one.

The amiable transformation created in his demeanor by the opiated caffeine was welcomed by all. As an excuse for his opiate abuse, Bicho mentioned that when the three kings had started their various nefarious businesses, it had been fun and adventurous, but now that the community counted on their support in many ways, and so what had begun as a youthful adventure, had been transformed into an insipid responsibility; hence, his need for opium. The three of them were trapped in the world of their making, much as I'd been trapped in my boring life in Mobile, much as most people are trapped in their life: family, job, obligations, addiction, routines, etc.

The gangsters talked about their suppliers, distributors, counterfeit customers (bonds, money,

and passports), gold suppliers in Brazil, their buyers, certain cops, rival dealers, and city politicians, etc. The latter included people whose palms had to be crossed and recrossed with cash, and/or supplied with drugs, or when possible, blackmailed or worse. They also discussed problems with neighboring gangs, who might represent up-and-coming forms of competition. There was discipline issues to be discussed about the citizens of Tepito, as well as their altruistic community endeavors; mostly looking out for the elderly, and the sick.

Only a few times had cops become too greedy. For fear of blow-back, they had been killed outside of Tepito, since it was assumed each cop had let someone know that he was going in Tepito. Quinto made it a point of knowing where everyone lived, except for me, but I was only a helpful customer, and a non-demanding friend, who every now and then, helped them out. Nevertheless, Quinto may have known where I lived, yet if he did, he didn't tell me. Quito easily could have paid Rosa to find out where I lived. All the months, I stayed in MC, I resided in the same hotel room.

Unlike Quinto, and most present day black American gangsters, Bicho and Aimon were fairly

humble. None of the three wore gaudy clothes, or much in the way of fancy jewelry. Each wore an inexpensive watch. Best I could tell, the three were not into materialism. On the other hand, Quinto's home was fairly lavish. Roughly half their profits went into the community, and the other half into their own private investments. All three had come from poverty and were extremely careful with their money. Frequently, they relied on the investment advise of one of their counterfeiters.

While they were all about killing someone, if necessary, homicide was not something gratifying for Bicho or Aimon. What pride they had, was not based on the killings, but the good they'd done for the black community members, and for their own families. Quinto had the oldest soul, which probably once belonged to Genghis Khan. A lack of humility and the joy of torture and killing with impunity, were Quinto's only flaws, yet he spoke about these things with a sense of pride and entitlement. He was absolutely proud of being a psychopath, much as the ancient Aztecs respected the psychopaths in their communities.

No matter what your profession: scientist, doctor, lawyer, cop, bus driver, soldier, priest, teacher,

constructor worker, stripper, engineer, etc., to be successful demands that you realize your limitations. Humility is a form of meditation, a clearer form of self-evaluation, a way of stepping away from the overconfident limited ego. Without the ability to occasionally do that, you're operating on thin ice. Blind ego, is usually the least innovative and most untalented portion of anyone's brain, but of course, the ego rarely knows that, and even if the ego realizes its lack of talent, it's usually not willing to admit it. The ego is but a tiny fraction of the brain, and so it lacks marked creative computational power.

Still, many untalented folks succeed, by the sheer irritating force of their ego, if that can be considered success. Such success is usually defined by money or by one particular talent or skill. Often egotists are salesmen, businessmen, or administrators, and are good at badgering and bullying the hell out of people, to get their way. All the while, the self-deluding ego-maniac thinks that they've been skillfully manipulative and clever, when in truth most folks get sick of them, to the point that they just give-in to the maniac's demands, to get them off their backs.

The three black Mexican kings were plainly

involved with criminal businesses, yet they also loved their families. They enjoyed a good joke, and possessed a parental interest in the welfare of the residents of their community. They promoted the aforementioned Friday night fights, but made no money from them. The cash from the fights went to the winners, and to aid the community, the: disabled, widows, elderly, sick and injured, etc. They'd purchased two small buildings, which served as nursing homes and recovery rooms for the sick or injured, and staffed them with young women to cook and clean, and young men to do the required lifting and bathing of the residents and patients. Quinto hand-selected the employees and personally managed many of the issues. He also had booked with a few comedians, singers, and musicians to regularly come in and perform for the residents, and the old folks loved them, and so did I. There was even talk of starting-up a small pharmacy, and bringing-on a live-in doctor and nurse, for the purpose of saving money, cutting down on the discomfort to the old folks, by having to transport them to and from the hospital or clinic.

Tepito ran a fair portion of the large black market for medicines in Mexico City: antibiotics,

anti-inflammatories, muscle relaxers, anti-fungals, birth control, synthroid, various pain killers, heart meds, tranquilizers, etc. The three black kings also sold the medicines in the surrounding towns and cities, as far away as Vera Cruz. The three kings would stage truck highjacking to obtain the drugs. Truck drivers received the agreed three thousand US dollars as payment, and the fairly severe beating as the exculpatory evidence that they had been legitimately robbed. The three kings got the load of pharmaceuticals. The truck was quickly driven to a warehouse, where the load was hurriedly transferred to another truck, then driven to the Tepito warehouse. Sometimes a couple of shots would be fired into the cab of the stolen truck, before it was left back on the street, to help the driver with his alibi. Back then, there were both Mexican and US pharmaceutical manufacturers in Mexico, and the three kings didn't discriminate, about who they robbed.

In the cafe that evening, I suggested that the kings identify the ten, or so, smartest children in Tepito, who also had loving, caring spirits, then they (the kings) support those kids, by having them intensely tutored, and eventually pay for them to

attend medical school, to become doctors and nurses, with the understanding that once they graduate, they then open, and work in Tepito. If a clinic was established, there would also be the corresponding need to purchase the proper equipment: x-ray machine, blood testing equipment, micro lab, surgical suite, etc. I also suggested that the three kings concentrate on developing a proper sewage system for Tepito.

The three kings also supervised four pimps, who managed about twenty-five to forty young women, the number constantly varied since the girls came and went. All of the prostitutes worked by choice, and none were addicts, just poor, and looking for a better life. They worked the nicer areas of the city in a semi-discrete fashion, usually at high-end clubs and hotel bars, which were all outside of Tepito. There were a couple of small drinking places in Tepito, but they barely qualified as bars. They were more like the cheap black juke joints in southern Alabama.

The pimps had been selected by the three black kings, and were mandated to look-out for the health and safety of the girls. They weren't like the pimps of the United States, who are only interested in impressing people with their sexual prowess, their

gaudy clothes, jewelry, and fancy cars. The pimps of Tepito were tough men simply working a job, actually helping the girls, and yes, making a profit. They were paid by Quinto. Back then in Mexico City, cops never arrested prostitutes, unless the woman had committed an associated crime, like stealing from or assaulting a customer. Quinto kept more than just a close eye on that enterprise.

Unlike other places in Mexico, none of the women were forced to work, and none were under eighteen. The women kept thirty five percent, and were furnished with condoms, protection, and check-ups. The pimps got about the equivalent of roughly five percent, and the three kings received sixty percent. In the city, I did see what I thought might be child prostitutes, but they all looked to be white or Latino; not the young black girls from Tepito. The three kings greatly frowned-on the use of underaged girls in prostitution, as did almost everyone, except of course, the pedophils.

The three kings also sold gold at one to two percent above spot price. Some of the gold came from western Brazil, where they purchased it in the form of beveled disks, which were flat on one side. They were anywhere from an inch to four inches in

diameter. This gold had to be processed for purity, dissolving the small amount of remaining mercury away, using 20% nitric acid. The surface gold had been washed into the fibers of the grass mats from the dirt, then it was shaken and rinsed into a Chinese wok, where mercury was added to chelate with the gold, which then sank to the bottom of the wok. The wok was heated where the water and some of the mercury vaporized, leaving the beveled disk of impure gold in the bottom of the wok. The mining operations were usually gang sponsored, at least the ones from where the three kings bought their gold.

There was also a lot of stolen gold. The gold mining areas of Brazil were like the wild west. The precious metal was about \$160 an ounce, back then, and I bought a few pieces at ten percent below spot, but sold them quickly to visiting tourists, for a quick profit. Gold was always easy to sell. Now days, Americans, who invest in gold, have to pay a certain percentage, when buying it, as well as lose a certain percentage, when selling it. In America, the average citizen is almost always going to get screwed, when it comes to investing, whether it's: stocks, bonds, CDs, IRAs, real-estate, precious metals, commodities, currencies, etc.

Later, in the Brazilian depression of the 1980s and 1990s, gold and silver were frequently used as money to purchase of goods and services. If brought into a store, the soft gold coins were often sliced into pieces and weighed-out on a pan balance to buy things. Other times, a gold or silver coin was simply deposited, with a given store, buying a certain amount of store credit, to later be used as needed. Of course with the spot price of gold went-up then that increase was not reflected in the credit. By the same token, if gold went down the shopkeeper lost out.

As previously stated, the three black gangsters also employed counterfeiters, three talented older guys: two latino guys, Juan and Antonio, as well as a crippled mixed man, Guillermo. Juan was an outstanding photographer. Antonio had owed a print shop, years prior, and Guillermo had been an electrician. He had received a severe electrical burn, from when he worked for the local power company, while changing-out a blown transformer. The power to the transformer had been cut, but a rookie unexpectedly turned it back on, while Guillermo was still working. Guillermo received no post-injury compensation. He'd sustained damage to his spinal cord, so his legs were dramatically affected, and he

suffered with chronic back and leg pain. Like Bicho, he was a regular opium user, but he smoked the black tar, and sometimes augmenting it with a little hash; nonetheless, he remained a good worker. He smoked just enough to get past the pain, and still carry-out his job. Just like there are people who drink a martini, or wine, only with dinner, there are also opium smokers, like Guillermo and Bicho, who can control their level of intake. All three of those counterfeiters were in their sixties. Guillermo was forever making fun of Quinto. Yet oddly, Quinto seemed to enjoy Guillermo's near constant flow of demeaning attention. Still, it could have been that the somewhat psychologically unbuckled Quinto enjoyed the unfortunate man's pain.

Chronic pain is like a furious bull, in the china shop of life, constantly wrecking the finer parts of one's existence.

Guillermo J. Gomez, 1975

The crippled Guillermo lived in one of the two nursing homes and could only work part-time. Juan, besides being into photography, had formerly worked

in the Mexican national mint, which was located right there in Mexico City, and was overly serious about nearly everything. He told me about the mint's history, saying that it had been established in the early 1500s, and first minted silver pieces of eight, then much later switched over to minting silver pesos, but not until the mid-eighteen hundreds. The third old guy, Antonio, who'd owned the printshop, was also the runner for the group. He was one of those rare people, who's extremely hyper, yet completely under emotional control, and not a big talker, yet the man spoke six languages, and that was helpful, when it came to talking with the various foreign people's, who wanted foreign counterfeit currency, or a forged passport. A lot of details went into certain passports. The three old guys made many kinds of passports: Russian, Paraguayan, Cuban, Colombian, Argentine, Chilean, Ecuadorian, Venezuelan, Brazilian, Honduran, Spanish, Italian, Austrian, etc.

The three black kings had subsidized the three counterfeiters, in that they had bought the equipment and materials, as well as the highly secure building, in which the old guys did their work. The three black kings also paid for all the delivery costs,

which often meant delivery trips overseas. The three guys counterfeited currency, only for brief periods. They'd work hard for a week and then be off for two weeks. A considerable amount of the counterfeit bills were Brazilian, 500 cruzeiro notes, and were used to purchase the previously mentioned Brazilian jungle gold, as well as some of the overseas drugs. The quality counterfeit currency was accepted as 70% actual value.

Various politicians and criminals (more often than not, they're synonymous), who purchased the counterfeit passports and currencies, wanted to be able to escape, and continue to ply their trade, in a different countries, without notice, should the proverbial manure hit the high speed fan. During the few times, I visited the counterfeiting establishment, I saw passports for at least twenty countries, being made. They still had two large cardboard boxes filled with surplus stacks of newly printed Columbian 200 peso notes. The three men had temporarily given-up printing the Mexican pesos, due to concerns with the Mexican feds. Instead of printing Mexican pesos, they were printing the US dollars, which were far easier, since they had no watermarks, at least not in those days. If busted for currency counterfeiting in Mexico,

the punishment was extremely stiff for the Mexican pesos, but for counterfeiting foreign currencies, the penalties were comparatively light, and since the peso was in a long slow dive anyway, why not stick with the easier and healthier foreign bills... easier to counterfeit, greater value, and with less criminal penalty. Like so many things, certain laws come and go, based not so much on logic or morality, as on the economics of political greed, especially when there is significant amounts of money involved. These are laws, which affect things such as: alcohol, insurance, gambling, counterfeiting, taxes, drugs, lotteries, marijuana, etc.

He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.
Socrates

Certainly, Socrates has something going with that quote, but maybe he should have inserted the word 'usually,' at the beginning of that statement. At least a few people might be content when they get what they would like to have. Criminals, CEOs, and politicians are rarely content, with what they have. Perhaps that's partially owing to the fact, that in almost every situation, most greedy people are

looking for how the situation benefits them, whereas regular folks are more prone to look for ways to help others.

The counterfeiting building was located at the end of a wide ally. It was faced by the backs of two windowless buildings. Consequently, it was easy to come and go from the building, without being seen. From the outside, the well built one story cinderblock counterfeiting building, looked like a filthy long forgotten dump of a building. The heavy steel front door in its steel frame had a small six inch by six inch glass window, impregnated with chicken wire, with an old smudged-up green roller shade, pulled three quarters of the way down. The shade had purposely been left partially up, so that the curious passerby could look inside to see that the entrance room held only some broken-up pieces of furniture, and wasn't worth trying to break through the steel door. Looking through the small widow, that room just looked like a small waiting room for a auto garage, a place where you might sit on cheap furniture, while you waited for your oil to be changed in your car, only without the TV. Everything in that room was filthy and covered in dust, giving the appearance that the building hadn't been used in

years.

The two locks to the steel door were substantial, further discouraging a break-in. In addition, there were no other windows to be found, anywhere on the old building. As a further precaution there was a magnetically controlled lock on the door. It was a simple mechanism, one I'd thought of while sitting in the cafe with the three kings. It operated strictly by placing a magnet against the front door and sliding the magnet to move a thick locking bar, which could slide in an angled channel inside the door, and inside the door frame. To lock the door, you simply moved the magnet, so that the locking-bar was slid so that half of it was in the door frame and half in the door. To unlock it, you moved the magnet to slide the locking bar, so that it was only inside the door. The handheld magnet had to be strong enough to move the steel bar through the steel door. In effect, the lock was highly effective, an undetectable barrier, and it operated by using only a small powerful handheld magnet. If you understood this description, perhaps you might want to use it, maybe you could even patent it, if there isn't already such a patent.

Once inside the entrance room, to get into the main room of the warehouse, you had to go through

a second locked reinforced interior door. The warehouse room was a large, extremely clean, and well lit workspace. It was spotless like a medical lab, with stainless steel work tables and various types of clean equipment. In those days, counterfeiting only required a photolithograph, adhesion promoter, like hexamethyldisilazane, wafers, sodium hydroxide, various inks, good printers, an ultraviolet light (using mercury vapor), the right kind of paper, cameras to photograph the ID buyer, film, and a dark room for developing. There were no hidden magnetic strips in the: passports, bonds, or currencies, to worry about. To give the currency age, the old dryer trick was used. Remove the dryers heating element, throw the bills in, along with a couple handfuls of poker chips, then let it run, periodically stopping the dryer to check the wear on the bills. Once you had the above-mentioned equipment, supplies, space, and knowledge, all you needed were a few real passports, genuine currency bills, or bearer bonds to use for go-byes, or photos. There was also a market for stolen passports and other types of IDs, but the three kings didn't indulge in police or military IDs. Here again, the penalties were too high, and in Mexico conviction could mean execution. Counterfeiting bearer bonds was very lucrative, but not without

risks. The issuing companies would frequently hire detectives to try to track down the counterfeiter and the distributors, but those detectives were more like mercenaries, than what most Americans think of as being detectives. Their job was to make sure that no more bad bonds would be made, by any means necessary, including killing the counterfeiter. If the detective only got the police to arrest the counterfeiter, there was still a fair chance that their counterfeit money would bribe certain legal officials, and the incarcerated counterfeiter would be set free and would be back in business, again.

Bicho asked me, if I wanted to learn the forgery trade, but while I had my own illegal passport, and flew a few places, mostly in South America, to help deliver some of the counterfeit money and fake passports, I declined the offer. Flying to another country to make a delivery and immediately returning, is like not visiting the place at all, especially if all you do is land at some airport in the dark, grab a cab to someone's resident, and then return right back to the airport for the next plane back. Fast easy money can be addictive, and I knew that if I started with the counterfeiting, I'd probably never want to quit. While I helped with doing a few

batches, I had no desire to be a counterfeiter. The danger was not so much the authorities, as it was the aforementioned detectives, and the obligation that came along with it. Governments have also been known to occasionally covertly execute counterfeiters, not just imprison them. Had I accepted the offer to learn the art and work as a counterfeiter, I'd have been forever in debt, and expected to work for the three kings. It wasn't hard to tell that Quinto felt he owned the three old counterfeiters. There was too big a vig attached to counterfeiting. Drug dealers are easy to replace, not so much counterfeiters. Since Guillermo was perpetually in pain and ill health, I had the distinct feeling they wanted to teach me the trade to take his place. Guillermo probably needed to permanently retire, to the nursing home.

Besides, the counterfeiting work was extremely tedious and immensely boring. It was not too different than working in a factory. At the time, the only real appeal was to learn all the techniques, and then go back to the States, and set-up my own shop, then never have to worry about money, again. In the US the Secret Service rigorously investigates counterfeiting, and was first set-up in 1865 to

initially do just that.

The vast majority of forged passports made by the three old men were sold in Mexico, various Caribbean Island nations, as well as countries in Central and South America. A handful were delivered to Europe. Delivering the passports could be tricky, but there was less security back then, still getting caught, with phony passports or counterfeit currency, could be worse than getting caught with drugs, depending on which country you got nailed in.

For many countries, the counterfeit currency was easier to make than the passports, but even back then, some of the bills had watermarks, which could be a bit tricky. Photos of the watermarks were used to make molds to manufacture the appropriate metal presses. These water-coated metal stamps called, 'dandy rolls,' were pressed into the counterfeit currency, when it was slightly damp with a dilute acidic vinegar solution. A near perfect passport, which Juan claimed to be 'virtually infallible,' would cost approximately \$2000 (about \$12,000 in today's money), and more, if it had to be delivered to a foreign country. The three kings were responsible for selling hundreds of them. Oddly enough, various police and police officials purchased them. The old

counterfeiters, who created the passports, used couriers, who couldn't be traced back to them. Temporarily, I served as a passport courier, and once with a couple big suitcases of cash. Luggage wasn't x-rayed at airports, back then. Part of the trick was to appear as nondescript as possible: typical haircut, regular clothes and shoes, carry a book or magazine to read, avoid conversation, etc. Normally, go-betweens would take the package to given location, then leave. The courier would get a call where to go pickup the package, and where to drop it off, as well as instructions on how to travel: flights, buses, boats, or trains. The tickets were often left in an envelope with the package. Bus and train station lockers were great places to leave the package, that way, only the small numbered locker key needed to be hidden. The packages were always prepared, so that there were no fingerprints on the money, passports, or the package wrap. Like I said, it was tedious.

The courier was given a payphone number to call, if a problem developed, and instructed to call five minutes after either 12 noon, 6 p.m., or after midnight, always using Mexico City time. A person was paid to answer the payphone and take the message from the courier, and deliver it to Aimon. If

another call was required the courier knew to keep calling at the appointed times, and the paid person would be there to receive the calls. Afterwards, the courier would get a call, to notify him where to pick-up his cash. The go-betweens, the couriers, and the payphone people were hand selected by Aimon, who pretended to be from Acapulco, and with the go-betweens and payphone people, he also concealed his affiliation with Tepito. He'd periodically spy on his employees to make sure they hadn't started working for the feds, or weren't being tracked by the aforementioned dangerous detectives, and had he discovered such things to be true, Quinto would have been called-in. Juan, Antonio, and Guillermo always thought there were too many moving parts, and lived in a near constant state of paranoia.

The documents, bonds, and phony cash were delivered by the couriers all over the aforementioned countries, but rarely to Europe. Back then, I only flew to Europe once, Madrid. However, I made several flights into parts of South America, but as mentioned, never spent more than a few hours at any of the destinations: once to Amapa, once to Asuncion, twice to Bogota, and twice to Lima. How I hated long airplane rides; thank God for good books.

One time, my return flight, got delayed in Lima for four hours, and my paranoid mind was certain that the plane had been delayed to give the feds time to come and arrest me. As it turned out, the plane simply had a flat tire.

Now and then, the counterfeiters would make passports for every member of some important person's family, including aunts, uncles, and cousins. All that was required was the cash in advance, the identity information (contrived or real), and the requisite small photos. In some cases, where money was no object, a handpicked photographer traveled to the customer to make the requisite photos, then return to Mexico City. Usually, the people just brought the photos with them, or mailed them. Aimon used a senile resident in one of Tepito's nursing homes, for the delivery address of anything illegal. The nursing home residents had their own individual mailboxes. The mail was actually delivered to the nursing home resident, since they were on the outer edge of Tepito, and so the mailman didn't have to walk into the black borough. Many of the other residents of Tepito used postoffice boxes for their mail.

With today's over abundant concern about

security, passports in the future may contain embedded microchips with biometric data, such as: holographic photographs, printed mathematical representations of: voice analysis, fingerprints, DNA samples (nucleotide sequences), bacterial respiratory flora data, dental photos, as well as iris and retinal patterns. It all can be easily converted into math, and then the math could be translated into shapes, figures, and various other types of measurable imagery; especially, with color thrown-in... so many wave lengths of light. In addition, there will probably be an embedded GPS locator, made with microcircuitry, so tiny, that it's much smaller than the dot on this 'i.' Nevertheless, even modern-day passports are easy to fool. The reason being, that you're allowed to bring your own passport photo. All you've got to do to fool the facial recognition, which that photo automatically grants the government, is to bring a photo of someone, who almost looks roughly like you.

Originally, passports were issued, so that, if you traveled somewhere, you went with the protection of your government. Now, passports may still perform that function, only much less rigorously; but perhaps, they're mainly being used to keep track of your

whereabouts, for rather their own selfish or paranoid reasons. The American government is now more concerned with its citizens simply talking with the enemy, than it is worried about protecting its' citizens from an enemy. Ever since Snowden laid waste to the entire *CIA*, with his version of homespun computerized bypass surgery, the intelligence communities have gone totally ape-shit. They now never know when someone may begin to think for themselves, and sell them down the river! Snowden probably realizes that he could have done the same thing covertly, without revealing that he was the one, who actually did it to the agency, but consciously or unconsciously, he may have wanted them to know he was the man who had jammed it to them... David putting it to Goliath.

All that is required to cause the US intelligence people to invade anyone's privacy is the slightest thing, which may ever so slightly smack of terrorism: surf the wrong site on the web, buy a can of black powder online, make an online contribution to a mosque, express sympathy for the Palestinians in a blog or email, buy too many bags of fertilizer at *Home Depot*, put a Bernie Sanders poster in your front yard, etc., and you may have provided NSA with

enough of an excuse.

My illegal Mexican passport would probably have allowed me to travel to many places that American citizens normally couldn't, in those days, that would have been Cuba and Russia. All that would have been needed was that I pretend to be Mexican, and as long as nothing untoward occurred, and no lengthy conversations had been required, I might have been okay. For that matter, I could have pretended to have a sore throat. Even though, I was curious about those places, I had no desire to get stuck in a communist country, only to be wrongly thought a spy. Imagine trying to explain that situation to a US State Department representative, if they'd even given a damn.

"It's really no big deal, sir. I merely have this extra Mexican passport, and somehow it's got the wrong name on it, but it's got nothing to do with espionage, or anything like that."

It would have been my luck, that Evangeline's dad was sent to interview me. I also had a fake American passport, under a phony name, which I used, when making my counterfeiting deliveries. Here again, I'd borrowed the name of one of my childhood friends. There's a part of me that regrets

not going to see said communist countries, for sometimes, its best to grab as much life as you can, while you still can. When it's all said and done, life passes by in the blink of an eye. Withdrawals at age twelve had made me eminently aware of the temporary nature of life. Life post alcohol detox gives you a more serious perspective, concerning life and death, and how truly brief one's life is. The subsequent depression didn't exactly inspire me to become something worthwhile, but it did make me want to see and do things before the inevitable end. I'm sorry to say, the experience of withdrawals didn't make me wish to be a better person, that inspiration came many years later with the birth of my child.

Getting back to the scene at the cafe... the four of us talked and ate. I mainly listened, but surprisingly every now and then, the three kings would ask my ill-informed opinion about some issue. Attempting to contribute something to their financial endeavors, I thought of Foxy, the dwarf, and the organized sports gambling, conducted at the Mobile YMCA. Bicho was quick to inform me that sports gambling, which was mainly on soccer and boxing, was under the auspices of the police commissioner of Mexico City. Not too different from how it was in

Mobile, with the sheriff and the Masons being the profiteers.

Aimon prepared another pipe filled with hash and blond tobacco. We passed the meerschaum baboon pipe, while inside the crowded coffee shop, and no one said a word; obviously, because they recognized Quinto, Aimon, and Bicho. Just listening to the cafe music, a weird form of blues, we became more stoned, drank another espresso, and high as a kite, we soon floated out the door, to settle back into the comfortable checker car, where Amparo tuned in a local music station, and asked the guys where they wanted to go. They just wanted to drive around and look at the sights of the city.

Oddly enough, a lot of macho Mexican males listened to sad love songs, and so a very high percentage of those songs, were played on the radio stations; far more so, than in the United States. The big hit back then was entitled, *Te Juro Que Te Amo*. Loaded on the tobacco-hash-caffeine blend, the simple little tune lightly carried me along.

As previously stated, the reality of music is, for the most part, located in the right temporal lobe, at least for males. Females tend to process music bilaterally. Its particular circuitry, and how and

where it hooks-up to the emotional, cognitive, and motor regions of a brain is an individualized thing, so it's hard to gauge the effect music might have on a person. For some folks, just a few notes played by a single instrument can trigger memories, almost as vivid as reality itself. A simple tune can induce emotions ranging from ecstasy to deep depression and can drive listeners into various forms of altered states, especially if they're on certain drugs. For me, the neurons of the musical cortex make inroads into my visual cortex, so with music, I've often enjoyed it best when my eyes closed, thereby intensifying the sights.

At times, I found myself marveling at how the three kings had carved-out and ran their minor empire, yet they were able to remain relaxed and happy in the running of it. All three of them had grown-up in poverty. But while stoned on whatever was in that monkey pipe, I recall thinking that perhaps being a king is mostly being comfortable in your own skin, as well as with your own demons, and just maybe it's also your ability to accept fate... to roll with the punches life inevitably throws your way. Good deeds, possessions, and power often create the false allusion of a king. Virtue may make a

saint, and items and money a wealthy man, but a king is something different, something more durable, without necessarily being moral. In the medieval days, it was a genetic issue, who had sex with whom, to possess the required DNA.

After a while, the three kings invited me to a few of their parties. These weren't parties like my parents would have given. The events were held in a large multi-room house. There was an abundance of weed, booze, drugs, women, and loud music. The many rooms were to afford the attendees privacy, as well there were public places to have sex. A few folks didn't care about the privacy; a stairway, a hallway, or the living room couch was just fine. The people were so high there was minimal conversation... just lots of sex. Simply getting near the place, you could smell the sex and the burning of weed and hash. Everyone, but me, were doing lines. All I had to do was sniff and rub my nose, and everyone assumed I had been snorting cocaine. Opiates were generally not used, since they crashed the sex drive. Sometimes even Bicho would abstain from his opiated coffee for one day, to better prepare his libido for the orgy. Had he abstained for much longer, he might have had withdrawals.

Returning from my first trip to the drug house, Esteban and I were riding atop the subway train with my meager half kilo of weed in a plain brown bag, the noises of the engine and the wheels on the rails were far too loud to allow for conversation, so Esteban and I just relaxed, laid there, content to be silent. As the subway roared along in the dark, passing above and below ground, I laid on my back and tried to think about finding a secure place to hide the newly acquired ganja.

If I unscrewed the ventilation cover in my hotel room and stored it in the vent, the stuff was so aromatic, the moment air whooshed through the vent, everyone would have smelled it. Besides, the vent was a fairly logical place for a nosey maid or cop to look. There was too much weed to try to hide it under the carpet, as I'd done with my money. The mattress and box springs were again too obvious, and I didn't want to damage the hotel's property. A little over a pound was too great an amount to hide in the toilet tank. Besides, I lacked a water-proof container, so there was no using my hotel room as a hiding place. In fact, there were too many people milling around the hotel at all hours. People might have smelled the weed, if I'd even walked through the

lobby, with it under my shirt.

As the train continued to rumble along in the dark, I thought of the old mason jars, I'd used to bury my dope and money around the Mobile area. But even if I had the jars which should be easy to procure, I wondered where could I possibly bury the stuff in Mexico City, without anyone seeing me do it? That's when it hit me, the pile of logs in *Chapultepec Park*, where I'd originally smoked with Esteban and his two gang members! The more I thought about it, the more it seemed that *Chapultepec Park* was the perfect location for such an endeavor, and next to the pile of logs!

The park had plenty of concealment, and was relatively convenient. After all, people tended to stay outside of the unlit interior of the jungle, at night. I'd just bury my dope in a different location barely outside the same log enclosure, and I could use the log enclosure for concealment, when breaking down my pound into smaller ounces for sale. I figured I could find the log pile, if I could locate the aforementioned castle, which had lights turned-on inside at night. The castle's lights became my beacon. From the castle, I'd just head to the nearby pile of logs.

Before heading for the park that night, I offered Esteban the equivalent of an ounce of weed for his helping me, but he refused the gift, saying it was the least he could do, since I'd been stabbed in the knee, as a result of his fight, with Knifeman. Thanking him for introducing me to the folks at the tin warehouse, and while Rosa was still at work, I headed to the park. On the way, even though it was getting late, I found the Mexican equivalent of a dry goods store. Temporarily I stashed the weed behind the building, under a washed-out piece of concrete. Luckily, the store sold glass jars, so I bought two large ones. The jars were like the old counter jars, in which you'd see large pickles, boiled eggs, or pig's feet, in the bars and delicatessens of Mobile. Each big jar cost about twenty cents. In addition, I bought a battery powered lantern, a few extra batteries, a box of plastic baggies, as well as a hand trowel to dig with. I was afraid that if I'd buried the kush only in the plastic bags, as Esteban had done in the log pile, rodents would quickly find the weed and eat it. Mice dearly love marijuana, especially the seeds. The seeds are an energy rich food source, and the small creatures appear to love the corresponding high.

With my new purchases in hand, along with my

dope, I made my way through the jungle. After a few minutes, I spotted the lights of the castle, and then with a bit of luck, I managed to locate the pile of logs in the pitch black. Finding the logs was no easy feat. It was so dark that I was within four feet of the logs, before I realized that I was looking at them. Walking in the jungle, I'd periodically stop and listen, to make sure I wasn't being followed. You absolutely cannot be too paranoid, when it comes to dealing drugs in Mexico. What I'm about to say probably indicates that I'm suffering with some serious psychopathology, but I've always imagined that as long as I've thought about something horrible, and imagined it happening to me, so vividly that I could manage to feel the corresponding fear, then that thing wouldn't actually happen to me. In essence, the small fear wards off the actual event. Yes, I fully realize that sounds absurd, still I don't completely believe it to be ridiculous. Perhaps, the small fear, reprograms my brain, so that somehow it can't happen... perhaps that's not true. This weird little idea is probably the closest I come to being superstitious.

After worrying about being caught bagging weed in the jungle park, I turned-on my lantern to survey

the log pile, then climbed-up on, and down inside. Once inside, the lantern allowed me to see, while dividing the weed-up into ounces, for selling them the next day. It seemed safe and cozy inside the logs. Though I had no scales to weigh-out the dope into ounces, I was fairly good at just visually estimating the volume. I had no real plan on how to sell the weed in that city, but just figured I would hangout wherever there were lots of American tourists, and try to spot likely candidates, since there are small clues to spotting a dooper. Selling weed in MC was a snap.

The half kilo yielded roughly seventeen ounces, or seventeen baggies of weed. Once all the weed was bagged-up, I put the individual plastic bags into the large jars, nine ounces in one jar, and eight in the other. If one jar was somehow discovered I still would have the other. After climbing outside the log pile, using my hand trowel, I dug in the soft dirt, and buried my glass jars with the screw-on lids on tight, smoothed-out the dirt, and sprinkled a few leaves over the area. The jars were only under about one inch of dirt, and therefore easy to access, the next day. I put the batteries and the small lantern in plastic bags then hid the equipment, inside some

thick nearby bushes, and threw the worthless marijuana stems far away in the jungle foliage, on my walk back to Esteban's. The job had taken roughly two hours to complete.

A few days later, I bought a half dozen candles, which proved to be surprisingly effective at providing light for doing my work in the log pile. I always made sure that I did not leave candle drippings in side the log pile which might later be found by Esteban.

Whenever I used candle or lantern light in the jungle, I positioned pieces of cardboard to block the light from going out in all directions. In this way, I better directed the light toward my work area. It was kind of the opposite principal I'd used, when hunting groundhogs, posting the white cardboard to silhouette the animal, when he popped out the hole.

Once I was back out of the jungle park, and into the streets, I stopped at a tiny grocery, bought a packet of Zig-Zags, a zippo, and a small can of lighter fluid. I'd brought a quarter ounce of weed with me, and went into the restroom of another store. Using a dollar bill to smoothly roll a few joints. I pocketed them, then fueled-up the zippo, and hid the can of lighter fluid up under the bathroom sink, for later

use. Before leaving the restroom, I carefully washed my hands to remove any trace of dirt and the smell of weed, then I took off my shirt, washed out my armpits and face, using the soap and paper towels, then headed to Esteban's to meet Rosa, when she got off work at the Chinese carryout.

Once at Esteban's, I lied and told him that I had hidden the dope in an abandoned dilapidated store, near my hotel, which actually existed, incase Esteban investigated. Skilled liars are always prepared with another lie. There were plenty of ramshackle buildings in the giant city, so the lie was plausible. While I trusted Esteban, I wasn't certain about the rest of the gang, nor their girlfriends. Until Rosa got off work, I hung-out with Esteban, smoked some ganja and listened to tunes. While waiting for Rosa, Esteban provided me a useful discourse on how the police were to be handled, if I got caught carrying dope.

Basically, it boiled down to properly orchestrating an on-the-spot low-key bribe. In general, Mexicans looked at the police bribes much differently, than Americans do, except for perhaps in New Orleans. In Mexico, it was almost as if bribing was a normal part of doing business, and not

considered to be immoral, unless it became publicly known, or involve the media.

However, a few reporters had even written favorable articles about police bribes, in that it kept down the case loads for the courts. In an odd way, this acceptance of graft made sense, as if it was part of a policeman's salary, or part of a game everyone was accustomed to playing. It was like paying the \$50, or posting the *GET-OUT OF JAIL FREE* card, in the home game, *Monopoly*. The way the United States government (the *DEA*) now manages the marijuana issue is nothing short of legalized criminality, and today it is just one of the reasons why so many people hate cops. The cops are enforcing laws which are not designed to protect but to aid the government in making money. There's nothing quite like locking up people for harmless weed, then rationalize that's it's okay, because the 'law' says its okay. Much too often, cops are average conservative people, who are merely doing what the system has told them to do, so they come off as unreasonable, because they can't think beyond the letter of the law, and in all honesty, they can't act outside the letter of the law, without risking their job, if not their grip on reality. Police often perceive the law as something holy, and

righteous; rather than, man made and highly flawed. Laws and the Bible are all man made.

Most American cops can't imagine, or frequently don't want to imagine, that marijuana is ridiculously safe, that it's non-addictive, and that it's far less dangerous than is legalized booze. Whatever the reason, they don't stop arresting people, and ruining lives over the harmless weed. On the other hand, investigating and arresting people for weed is a huge money maker for the government, due to such things as: fines, jails, prisons, cops, *DEA*, Coast Guard, probation cost, attorneys, public defenders, prosecutors, judges, police cars and other equipment, dogs, bail bonds, etc. The taxpayer's costs for keeping weed illegal are nothing short of staggering, not to mention how the people's lives are impacted: loss of job, financial strain (fines, bail, probation costs, and legal fees), social alienation, criminal record, loss of family, etc.

A street cop's salary in Mexico was abysmally low, and generally not sufficient to decently. Certainly, it was not enough to raise a family on. Even now, the average cop's salary in Mexico is \$350 per month, and that's not much when you consider the threat, which the cartels represent. Consequently,

most cops keep one foot in each house. In a practical way, bribing was, and probably still is, a sensible addendum to the policeman's low pay. In cases, where a cop ran into a large stash of illegal cash (stolen money or drug money), it was customary that the cop be allowed to 'skim' ten percent, up to a certain amount, and provided no arrests were made. The criminals knew that once the cop caught them with the money, he could take his share, but again, no one went to jail. Needless to say, that semi-illegal maneuver was not without risk; especially if the crooks were hardcore, armed, and didn't feel like following that social custom of giving-up ten cent. Consequently, the cop had to be careful not to make too big a bust, or get too greedy, or if so, to bring a few of his cop friends with him. If the cop took his share in product, he'd have no problem getting rid of it, since dealers were plentiful.

This immediate bribe punishment of the criminal was swift, and without the expensive and time consuming trial. Moreover, the entire court system was spared the insult of a victimless crime. With the bribing of the cop, the criminal just lost some of their money or drug. As a result, the 'best' cops lived fairly well, whereas had there been no bribing or

‘skimming,’ they might have practically starved to death, and no one would want to be a cop. According to the strict interpretation of Mexican law, accepting a bribe by a police officer was technically illegal, but in reality it was the expected norm, as long as it was not the cop committing extortion or demanding protection money. This ‘skimming’ also kept taxes down. Now, powerful cartels frequently carry-out huge amounts from extortion, and use the cops, as if they’re simply employees.

All things considered, I pretty much agreed with the Mexican cop bribing methodology, since weed is basically an innocuous herb. The costly American legal system now wastes countless police resources, destroys the finances and employability of many marijuana users, growers, and dealers, and all the while, it overloads the courts, jails, and prisons, while draining the government coffers of taxpayer money. All things considered, the Mexican bribing system seems to be vastly superior to how weed is managed in the US. If you dealt marijuana and got snared by a Mexican cop, just pay the proper bribe. In that respect, it’s like a dealer tax, without all the misery, and the average citizen benefits since his or her taxes are less. Oddly, this uncomplicated Mexican

bribery justice made better sense than the American legal system, where brilliant attorneys became wealthy off legal idiocy, and where overworked public defenders persuade scads of harmless poor people to accept reduced and sometimes undeserved prison sentences, etc. A jail or prison sentence, for using or dealing marijuana, is not only unfair, its immoral.

And then, there's all that associated prison profiteering, involving the corporations which run the prisons. The prisons sell the inmate labor to major corporations for huge profits, with the inmate only receiving 28 cents per hour, and you, the taxpayer, receive no benefit, not one red cent. As well, there are those associated prison expenditures: food, uniforms, medical concessions, expensive out-calling telephone systems, cleaning services, over-priced prison equipment, electrical costs, water and sewage, etc.; all over the sale of a little bit of weed. You the taxpayer get to pay for all that foolishness. About eighty-five percent of those incarcerated in the United States are for non-violent crimes, and all that cost us, the taxpayers, an absolute fortune. There are about 2.4 million Americans in prisons. At \$50,000 per annum, per individual, that's the tidy sum of

\$115 billion. Eight-five percent of that amount is what we are paying to keep nonviolent people locked-up... \$97, 750,000,000.00. Over fifty percent of the drug busts are for pot. God, can't marijuana be expensive? The prison industry would have to bite the bullet, if weed were to be legalized.

Moreover, in my day a person selling marijuana could spend years in prison; whereas, with the good ole Mexican police bribery system, it was a simple \$50 fine, or if it's a ton of weed, then it might have been \$1000. Just consider the savings in prison costs for the taxpayer. That seemed fair to me, after all, weed is such an innocuous high. In that respect, that aspect of the American legal system is morally screwed, and patently toxic to the health of the country. The only realistic motive for such destructive legal actions is governmental greed. Since anyone can easily grow marijuana, the government would not easily get its taste of the commerce. Of course, they think they're entitled. Sure you can license and charge the growers and stores/dispensaries, as well as tax the sales, but in the end, it will soon become impossible to enforce laws against people for growing their own. Once pot is sold everywhere, what cop is going to bust some fellow

with plants in his backyard? In America, without all the petty weed cases, public defenders might literally be able to prepare a genuine defense for their clients, and so fewer innocent people might be getting locked-away. It's no wonder that, per capita, America has more of its citizens locked away, than any other country on earth!

According to Esteban, once the cop had you in the car, the Mexican police officer was transformed into the: judge, jury, attorneys, court clerk, bailiff, stenographer, the drug screener, the drug councilor, etc. Just imagine what a encumbrance would be lifted, if ninety percent of the petty marijuana deals never made it to trial, not to mention that the police officers would get significantly better pay. Fifty dollars was a significant sum in Mexico, especially back then, and it probably still is. Because of this lucrative semi-legal side benefit, Mexican cops were proactive about their jobs. While you may wish to think of those police as being corrupt, in those days, they rarely if ever used their power to extort money from the innocent. In those respects, they were honest, yet not following the unfair letter of the law. Moreover, the Mexican police did not seem to have a problem with racial discrimination. All of Mexico

seemed to not notice a person's race. The Mexican cops, even if they looked exceptionally white, were routinely colorblind; nevertheless, they didn't like Americans, since Americans often suffer with insufferable hubris. That assumption is at times deserved, but such prejudice may also be born of a certain amount of economic jealousy. Poor people do love to hate the rich, but the reverse is more often true. If the wealthy Donald Trump is elected president, you can bet he'll discriminate against the poor. Anything he'd do for the poor would be minimal and for show. The richer the driver, the more they're apt to hate that homeless guy on the street corner, holding a cardboard sign. Pulling-up to a red-light, with a homeless man holding-up his, 'Need Help... Homeless... God Bless,' and my rich friends often let go with loud adrenaline-filled curses.

“Look at that worthless piece of shit standing over there! You know God damn well, that if you give him any money all that bum is going to do is spend it on drugs or booze!”

Back in those days in MC, it did seem that in the main that the average Mexican had endured far more hardship, than had your average American, yet they were still kinder people. Now days, the kinder

gentler Mexicans, and Central Americans, are being driven out of their country by the drug lords: Los Zetas, Cartel del Golfo, La Familia y Los Caballeros Templarios, Cartel de Sinaloa, Cartel de Los Beltran Leyva, and Cartel de Tijuana (Arellano Felix), and various affiliated groups. Probably the only way to end this problem is for the American military to cross the border, shoot first and ask questions later. That should be presided by massive amounts of intelligence work to accurately ID all the high value targets.

While some politicians would have you believe that most of the Mexicans crossing our southern border are criminal, in truth, they're largely good people escaping the cartels. My bet is that if Hillary is elected the influx will increase, and if Trump is elected he'll definitely try to build that wall he talks about. Hard working individuals, who are fleeing for their lives, should be welcomed, yet still have to complete the requirements for citizenship, not sneak in. Immigrants, who are found to be members of gangs, or who break the law, should be jailed and/or deported, with the understanding that if they are caught returning to the United States, they should face a significant mandatory prison sentence.

Unlike now, shootings were a rare event in MC. Apparently, Mexican law enforcement has become like those cops in the movie, *Man on Fire*. Indeed, the notorious drug cartels have put a serious whammy on the Mexican people and their government. In fact, they effectively are the Mexican government, but without the corresponding responsibilities. Just as the United States politicians serve as front men for the military industries and other corporations, the Mexican politicians operate as fronts for the drug cartels. Both the US military industrial complex, and the drug cartels, kill and injure a lot of folks.

The Mexican elections are likely controlled by the cartels, or perhaps later, the cartels may threaten and/or bribe, whomever is elected. One day soon, we may find that the American election system has been corrupted, especially since its computer controlled, and therefore easily hackable. Bush lost the election, but got the office; likewise that's probably the only way Trump can be elected. You can bet that, whomever gets elected by hacking, will be the one screaming that the other side was trying to hack the system... basic reverse psychology 101. The democrats will say the republicans benefited from the hacking, and the republicans will scream that it

was the democrats, who profited. What has never ceased to amaze me is the fact that the citizens of the US didn't object more to Bush's getting the presidency. Nation of... American citizens are just too complacent, about their government.

If marijuana were legal, there would be no marijuana arrests. That's really a no brainer. People who already smoke ganja would probably continue, but without fear of arrest, and those who don't smoke would probably still continue to not smoke the herb. In a much different way, the cocaine problem is also easily eliminated. Just skip ahead and read the chapter entitled, *Ending the Drug Problem*, in the next book of this series, book VII. In those days in Mexico, if a police officer grabbed you with a little dab-a-dope, and you hadn't been violent, or made him run too far to collar you, or spit on him, or screamed obscenities at him, or claimed that the dope wasn't yours, then the odds were quite good that the poor but kindly policeman would probably allow you to sit in the patrol car, without wearing handcuffs. Once in the police car, neither you, nor the cop, were to speak. That brief silent pause was your chance to act, and to set yourself free. The cop might pretend to be reading something or maybe just

sit with his gun in his lap and pick his nose, but that brief moment of silence was for you to present the bribe, and it had to be done correctly, with calm, and without words! Speaking could ruin your chances of avoiding arrest, ergo you ended-up in the smelliest most painful hellhole of the universe, a Mexican prison. The silence was mandatory, because for all the cop knew, you might be wearing a wire. Besides, the cop was not at all interested in what you had to say, regardless of what it may be.

The cop didn't want to hear about your desperate life, your hungry kids, your tough life, your sick mother or sister, how you'd never sold dope before, that it really wasn't your dope and that you just found it, and were just in the process of taking it to the police station, etc. He didn't care about your guilt or innocence. He only wanted to see the bribe money, and that had to be done in a very specific and tranquil manner. Esteban was emphatic that if I were so detained, that I spoke as little as possible, for if the cop sensed that I was an American, it increased the likelihood of my being locked-up, and the Mexican courts were famous for bleeding the state-side relatives of arrested American tourists of every drop of cash they could squeeze out of their wallets.

Correspondingly, Esteban instructed that I never carry ID.

The financial bleeding of the arrested American's relatives, back in the states, was for various fictitious fees, fines, and costs: attorney, food, phone use, medical care, attorney costs, clothing, laundry, mattress, blankets, TV time, books, delousing, toiletries, etc. All of those bogus expenses were trumped-up by the Mexican police, jailers, and prosecutors, in an ongoing effort to extort, as much money as possible, from the American inmate's friends and relatives. All that expensive pretensive crap would drag-on for months, before an actual hearing would be convened. The defense attorney might tell the family that lots of witnesses had to be deposed, and additional evidence had to be gathered, all of which required the family to send more and more money. Throughout these contrived delays, the American would be living in the virtual bunghole of the universe, where their odds of surviving ran from poor to nonexistent. Every so often, the prisoner would be allowed to telephone their relative or friend, for the sole purpose of telling them how bad things were; that way, the: police, jail, judge, etc., could more extort additional money.

This protracted extortion of the prisoner's family and friends was usually managed by an aging desk-bound detective, calling your family and friends long-distance, while charging them for the call. However, if the arrested individual came from a wealthy family, often the sheriff would personally handle the family, telling them it was customary, with the arrest of foreigners, that the sheriff handle all communications, with the family. In which case, the money had to be sent in the form of cash, or cashier's checks, made out to the sheriff. Of course, some detectives had been known to supplement their name for the name of the sheriff, and then they'd pocket the money. This too was considered to be an acceptable supplement to the detective's salaries, unless of course the sheriff found out, but even if that happened, the sheriff might just ask for the money, which the detective had already received, and not fire the detective. Graft was the norm.

These modern day cartels are far more ruthless, than the drug lords of the 1970s, pit-bulls versus rats. The Mexican cartels now, commit between 15,000 to 20,000 murders per year, often with a significant quantity of creative preliminary pain. The pain serves as a warning to others, as well as to bring joy to the

unyielding hearts of the cartel sadists, who happily serve it up.

“Joey, your accent is great, but your vocabulary and grammar isn’t too good. So just give the cop one and two word answers, ‘Yes sir, no sir, you’re right, sir, please, thank you, etc.’ And, you should be fine.” Esteban sagely advised.

“Cough a little, but don’t over do it. Tell him you are sick. That way, he’ll want to get you out of his car even faster, especially if he thinks you’re contagious. Every once in a while tuberculosis becomes a problem, here in Mexico City. Everyone is terrified of TB. {The TB rate is many times higher in Mexico, than in the United States. Tuberculosis is highly endemic to Mexico, being most prevalent in the native Indian populations of southern Mexico and Baja California. The problematic multi-drug-resistant strains are fairly common, and frequently fatal.} Before the car begins to move, the cop will give you time to put the cash on the car seat, and there’s a way to do that, too.”

“Without making eye contact, just put the fifty dollars on the car seat, between you and him, or if you’re in the back, just lay it on the backseat, where he can turn around and easily see it. Spread the bills

out enough, so that he can easily count them, without his having to touch them, and don't look at the money, but just look out the side window, away from the cop. Whatever you do, don't try to hand him the money; that's incriminating, and it's sure to get you arrested. After the money's on the carseat, don't say anything. Remember, not speaking is very important! You don't want him to think you are wired, or that you're an American. If you're lucky, sometimes you even get your dope back, if it's just a small amount, but definitely don't ask for it. Sometimes, the cop will give you half your dope back. After you've put the money on the seat, be patient, and just wait for the cop to speak"

Esteban also said that if I got caught by a beat-cop, without a patrol car, the cop would probably take me to a concealed spot, and I was to put the money on the ground, or on a park bench, or in a restroom sink, and then I was to turn and take a couple of slow steps away from the money. He continued instructing me in the art of the successful bribe. If the cop considered the cash adequate, the policeman would simply tell me to exit the vehicle, or if on foot, tell me to leave. I was to quietly exit the car, or just walk away. He said that if the fifty dollars

wasn't enough, the cop would just sit and stare, and I'd better ante-up more money. Hence, Esteban recommended that I always have at least fifty dollars on my person. As long as all I was carrying was weed or hash, fifty dollars would be adequate.

Getting caught with pills or capsules, hallucinogens or speed, would require twice as much money. Cocaine and heroin might be as much five hundred dollars, yet sometimes for those two hardcore drugs, there was no acceptable bribe with certain cops, yet another good reason not to deal in hard drugs. Esteban said not to worry about the American money making the cop think that I was an American, since many Mexicans preferred to only use the American greenbacks, anyway.

“Keep the fifty dollar bribe in a separate pocket, in ones, fives, and tens... no twenties. The smaller bills will make the cop think that you've shown him all your money, that you're poor, and help to keep him from getting too greedy with you. Keep the rest of your money hidden in another pocket. Once the cop sees that the dollars which have been spread-out on the seat, have emptied your pocket, he'll probably figure you're broke, and not expect more. Don't smile, and don't show fear, and remember to keep

down the talking and the eye contact. Always remain polite and respectful, but reserved. Remember, it's only business, and don't even give this procedure a second thought. Once the cop says it's okay, or to get out of the car, or he takes the money and nods, then just get out and walk away; don't run and don't look back. Then, stay clear of his patrol area for a few weeks. If you ever see the cop later, act like you don't recognize him. Try not to let him see you, in fact, try not to be noticed by any cops." Esteban elucidated.

Esteban explained that bribing was an accepted custom throughout all of Mexico, but only for the middle class and the poor. Rich people tended not to get arrested, or if they did, they simply placed a call to the sheriff, then frequently the policeman, who made the arrest, was reprimanded or fired, depending on how angry and influential the rich arrested party might have been. Sometimes, the cop would be required to drop by the rich person's home or office, apologize, and ask for forgiveness! There were even cases where the offending officer would be required to work for the rich man, for no pay. Generally, this free employment took the form of security work, guarding the rich man's home or

business, during his off-hours from the police force; however, cops had been known to do yard work, house work, act as chafferers, handyman work, etc.

The cop had to humble himself, or he might lose his job, or worse, depending on the vindictiveness the arrested wealthy party. In addition, the cop who'd made the mistake of arresting the rich guy, might be ordered to pay his chief, who in turn passed-on the money to the rich man for the inconvenience of being arrested. Consequently, the moneyed of Mexico were rarely arrested. As a result, even the appearance of wealth: clothes, shoes, jewelry, cars, etc., spoke loudly, producing fear in many a police officer's heart. If you drove an high-end auto and wore an expensive suit, the cops tended not to give you a second glance. In those days, rich people were also prone to being overweight, so oddly enough, obese males were usually considered attractive by Mexican women, and not just because of the money. It was also that way in Spain, when I was a kid. Many attractive Spanish women went for fat guys.

In the 1970s in Mexico City, albeit somewhat immune from arrest, the rich people feared being mugged by random street thugs, while the thugs

feared the cops, and the cops feared the rich folks; it was a simple triumvirate of metropolitan cultural paranoia. That way, there was plenty of fear to go around for everyone. No matter what your station in life, paranoia has a way of finding you. There's always something to allow the right side of the amygdala to fire-off, dumping its unsavory stores of fear-producing neurotransmitter. If it hasn't fired for a while, it can do so in your dreams, and thus may be born a nightmare.

While in Mexico City, I avoided the police and soldiers, as if they carried bubonic plague; luckily, I never got arrested, though on two separate occasions in southern Mexico, I would come extremely close to being incarcerated by Mexican soldiers; soon to be described. Esteban warned me that it was extremely difficult to bribe a soldier, because they tended to travel in groups, whereas cops tended to operate alone. If arrested by soldiers and jailed, you needed someone on the outside, who could quickly bribe the jailer, if need be, the prison warden, but it costs a lot, and the person had to be able to travel to the jailer's or warden's home, or to meet-up with them when they got off work. However, once released from a Mexican jail or prison, you had to leave the country,

since you'd be listed as an escapee, and a warrant would be issued.

Avoiding the authorities in MC reminded me of watching out for the military police on the Navy base in Rota Spain, when I was a kid, only it was more dicey. The Mexican police did have plainclothes undercover officers, who I also had to be on the lookout for, but they too could be bribed. They just cost a little more, roughly twice what the street cop cost. Bicho had one such undercover, he occasionally paid for introducing him to wealthy buyers/dealers. He paid such cops in accordance with how much the buyer purchased. In that respect, the cop was actually paid a percentage of the sale, a referral fee, so to speak. Bribing police not only helped the three kings avoid being busted, but assisted them in finding new sources of product and distributors. Distributors were often young clever guys, who'd been arrested. The cop would see to it that the charges were dropped, if the young guy agreed to work for the three kings. Distributors ran large amounts of product around Mexico. Before being given any product, they'd first have a sit-down meeting with Quinto, where he made it clear that he knew where the young man's family lived, and that

he, Quinto, was adept at various forms of torture.

While the three kings undeniably operated outside the law, in many ways, they were more moral than the police, and more trustworthy. Granted, Quinto occasionally killed people, but it was only for some grievous wrong executed against the three kings or against some innocent person in their community; whereas, the cops often killed people simply to steal, or while in the hire of some rich gangster. Moreover, consider the fact that the police really did little to nothing of an altruistic nature for the people. The government of Mexico existed to make sure that the rich remained rich, sort of like the American republican party does today. Where the cops were purely selfish, the three kings took care of Tepito's older people as well as their infirm, protecting their people, while administering justice. The Mexican government did virtually nothing for the people of Tepito, and very little for the citizens of MC, except for the rich. Conceivably, this is one reason why so many police worked for the three kings. In a way, the three kings, though somewhat stringent, were in many ways more honorable.

Bicho advised me, that if the undercover cop

demanded to know where I'd obtained the dope, to simply tell him the truth; that I'd gotten it from the three kings. There were three reasons why that might have been an effective deterrent. One, the black dealers always paid their requisite dues to the police; two, no sane cop would go into Tepito, to checkout my story; and three, no cop wanted Quinto on his trail. Bicho also said to feel free to use their names, and give the cop enough information, to convince him I was dealing directly with Bicho, Quinto, and Aimon, and if that didn't work, just give the cop the phone number to the Tepito warehouse. If the undercover realized I was a gringo, he'd find it hard to believe I purchased my drugs from the black three kings of Tepito, hence the need for the warehouse phone number. If no one answered at the warehouse, I was to call Juan, the counterfeiter, and I'd be freed in no time. So armed with Esteban's and Bicho's advice, I felt safer. In spite of that, I still carried the same fifty dollars in my left front pocket, for the entire time I was in Mexico City. Being fairly vigilant and more than a little paranoid, I never had to use the fifty dollars, nor I need Tepito to vouch for me.

On a more positive note, Bicho mentioned that an undercover agent could help me to expand my

drug trade, but that the cop would probably extract a considerable percentage for his 'invaluable' assistance, sometimes as much as half. The trick was to find an undercover, who had extremely wealthy contacts. Bicho offered to help, but I declined that offer. There was just too much animosity in the Mexican government for Americans, so I wanted to maintain a low profile. I suspected that Bicho wanted me to help him establish American markets for cocaine, etc., but I was happy to remain smalltime, with non-addictive weed, hash, and mescaline. I made the mistake of telling him about Harold, my drug supplier in New Orleans, and Bicho wanted me to make the arrangements. He was particularly interested in Harold's schooner; nevertheless, Bicho had access to a 42 foot ocean going trawler, docked in Tampico. The trawler was used when they were getting drugs from Maracaibo, Venezuela, and the three would occasionally use it to go deep sea fishing.

If you dealt in hard drugs, and hired dealers to work for you, there was no doubt that you'd attract the attention of other dealers and gangs, and it was just too much risk for an American in Mexico. The danger in the US was minimal, since there was no

effective threat from the *DEA*, back then. They didn't become effective until the 1980s.

My causal relationship with Rosa and Esteban's crowd, as well as the three black kings: Bicho, Quinto, and Aimon, lasted almost a year. But over time, I came to realize that we were vastly different in certain critical ways, and the gang-life, with lots of ganja and booze, was just not my thing, no more than had been my conventional marriage to Margo in Mobile, where she never got tired of smoking weed. Rosa had been born into the gang life, since her dad was a killer emeritus.

The only longterm relationship that I've truly been happy with is raising my lovely daughter. Bicho and his guys were into too much heavy stuff for me. To them, killing and contributing to the world's problem with addiction was nothing more than business, much as it is with most governments and certain huge corporations, for rare is the war that's not started by greed, and scarce is the pharmaceutical that doesn't turn a huge profit, while it doesn't cure. In fact, it may occasionally kill, due to addiction or side effect. And, just look at how many Iraqi women and kids we killed for *BP* and *Exxon* to get all that oil. Compared to certain US

corporations, the the black kings were like Alfalfa, Stymie, and Buckwheat.

And then, there's the matter of what happened to the immense Iraqi treasury, Saddam's money. Sure the dinar crashed, but Saddam's places were filled with huge amounts of cash from most of the major countries. Hundreds of billions of dollars, if not trillions, which the American people, are left in the dark about. Have you ever seen the deposit slip, where the immense wealth of Iraq was deposited into the US Treasury? Worse yet, the Bush administration is rumored to have flown in 360 tons of US cash, to prop-up the destroyed government, and wonder if *Balliburton*, got any of that cash for those 'costly' reconstruction projects? And you've got to wonder, if any of that money found its way into Dick and George's pockets.

Secretary of Defense, Cheney may have given contracts to Balliburton to rebuild Kuwait, severely damaged in the first Gulf war. After that, perhaps Cheney may have commissioned *Balliburton* to carry-out a secret study, about replacing the US military's logistics with private companies. From 1995 to 2000, Cheney had been the CEO of the company, during which time, it could be that *Balliburton* increased its

offshore tax havens from 9 to 44, and their taxes may have dropped, by more than 75 percent! During this time, *Balliburton* may have done business with countries like Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Iraq, Libya, Iran, and Nigeria, even when the US had strict sanctions against those countries. The company skirted said sanctions, and lobbied against them. Some of Balliburton's business with those countries may have been illegal, and the company could have been fined for it. Bush may have sent a letter to Congress exercising his authority, to waive section 9007, removing sanctions and allowing *Balliburton* to assist the oil-rich Azerbaijan. That administration may have invited the head of Azerbaijan to visit the White House, even though that person could have been the primary reason for those sanctions, against Azerbaijan. Why? Azerbaijan has a lot of oil.

While he was still CEO of *Balliburton*, Cheney headed-up Bush's Vice-Presidential Search Committee, and oddly enough picked himself as the Vice Presidential candidate. Cheney was supposedly asked whether *Balliburton*, or its subsidiaries were trying to do business with Iraq. He may have said, no. Some people claim that this could have been dishonest, since supposedly *Balliburton* subsidiaries

sold over \$70 million in oil-production parts to Iraq. *KBR*, a *Balliburton* subsidiary, was granted an ‘open-ended’ contract to supply Army troops, and for Navy construction. This unique contract might have had no limit on costs!

When Cheney left *Balliburton* it was rumored that his severance package exceeded \$60 million. In December of 2003, *Balliburton*, perhaps without competitive bids, was given a contract to restore the Iraqi oil sector. It was billed initially as a contract to put out oil-well fires, something in which *Balliburton* had little expertise, but as it turned out, that contract could have actually been for the restoration of the oil business in Iraq. It was kept secret because of the ‘emergency conditions.’ It might be one of the largest military logistics contracts in history. In March 2003, supposedly a Pentagon email claimed that the action on a no-bid *Balliburton* contract to rebuild Iraq’s oil industry was coordinated, with VP Cheney’s office. In [August 2004](#), The *SEC* (*Security Exchange Commission*) may have levied a fine of \$7.5 million on *Balliburton* for illegal accounting in 1998, when Cheney was CEO. Some people believe that politics could have shielded Cheney, from being held accountable. As mentioned, the three kings of Tepito are small

change in comparison.

So, although the three kings were somewhat ruthless, I must say that at least I wasn't bored, as I'd been in Mobile, plus I was making some serious money. Having made the trip into black Tepito with Esteban, I went back numerous times by myself, to buy anywhere from one to three kilos of weed each time, along with kilo bricks of hash, and a few special orders, which was usually a little speed or mescaline, for my European customers. The closest I came to hiring a dealer to work for me was the concierge, at the hotel where I stayed. However, after Black's betrayal of me, I'd learned my lesson about trusting people.

Tepito's hash was always dark brown or blond, soft, and consistently feathered nicely. The hash bricks came with what looked like a Laotian symbol, perhaps from their alphabet, embossed into the highly aromatic clay-like hash. That country's alphabet is huge compared to English, with 27 consonants, 7 consonantal ligatures, 33 vowels, and 4 tone marks. I never found-out about the symbol on the hash, but just assumed it was Laotian. It looked a little like a sloppy 'W.'

To tote my purchases out of Tepito and back to

the *Chapultepec Park*, I'd wear a small cheap nondescript backpack, dressed neatly but humbly, wore my hair in a conventional Mexican style, and often carried a book in my hand to appear as a student, as well as to have something to read. As my business grew, I bought more jars and after each trip into black Tepito, I would return to my ever-handy log hide-out in the park, and by the light of my battery-powered lantern, and/or a few candles, I'd break-down the weed into smaller ounce-sized plastic bags, and with a single edged razor blade, I'd cut the large soft hash brick into rough one and five gram-sized cubes, wrapping each in aluminum foil, then I'd stored them in the wide-mouth jars to be buried, barely under the surface of the jungle, to sell the next day. One gram of hash went for five dollars, and five grams went for twenty. By buying the large bricks, a gram cost me less than one dollar. Not using a scale, I'd just eyeball the weight of the hash.

Six to ten hours a day, I'd work selling my wares, just as if it was a regular job. The length of the work day varied, depending how quickly I could sell-out. Except for rainy days, there were no more than a handful of days, when I wasn't able to sell my daily allotment. The work was routinely fun, but I had to

constantly stay on the lookout for the police and gangs. Several times, I suspected that gang members had spotted me, and had gone to report me to their group, so I'd quickly grab a cab and vacate the area, to set-up shop in another part of the city, post haste. Only once did I actually get confronted by a gang member, but once I started speaking in English, and told him I was from Florida, and was only there for the week, he left me alone. Thinking he missed judged me as a Mexican drug dealer. No Mexican gang member had ever heard of an American drug-dealer, operating in Mexico City, so he probably assumed I was a non-threatening tourist, who was just selling a little weed, ergo the guy left me alone. Sometimes I'd be selling in an area and get a creepy feeling, and so I'd hail a taxi and go somewhere else to sell. At first, I didn't know the city so I'd just ask the cabbie for help.

“Please take me to where there are a lot of American tourists.”

Generally, during my day's selling business, two to four times I'd return to my shallowly buried jungle jar, containing my day's prepared stash to be sold, to resupply myself. Once the jar was empty, I'd stop selling that day. Each day of dealing was different,

and required some amount of novel innovation. I operated in a constant state of paranoia.

One afternoon, near the center of the massive Chapultepec park, I traversed a rocky area, where I found and dislodged a very large flat piece of rock, and dig-out a small pit beneath it, thereby creating yet another hiding place for a jar. When I'd replaced the roughly one hundred pound rock, you couldn't tell that anything had been disturbed, and so I had another dirt bank for the next day's selling, but with that new location, I didn't have to dig in the dirt, so my fingernails stayed cleaner, and I was getting tired of dirty fingernails from digging-up jars. It only took a couple of seconds, to lift and move the heavy stone, and where it was located, I was largely shielded from view by rocks and trees.

For some weird reason, it seemed rather comfortable, to be dealing drugs in such a huge multicultural city, filled with ancient history. It was nothing like dealing in redneck Mobile, where everyone knew each other. In Mobile, I was more obvious, and felt vulnerable and despicable, due to the prevailing attitudes concerning illegal drugs. But in MC, I felt semi-invisible and much more like an everyday business man. Besides, all those bribable

cops more or less condoned drug dealing. Getting caught wasn't as bad as getting a speeding ticket in Mobile, since by paying the drug bribe to the cop, there was no record to relentlessly haunt you, and not even the need to travel to the courthouse to pay the file.

Even the ancient Aztecs, who'd founded Mexico City, more than seven centuries ago, on top of a huge lake, were well known for their drug use. The drug-producing plants included ololiuqui, teonanacatl, sinicuichi, toloatzin, peyotl, etc. Some folks have told me that the lake was originally the lake created by a long extinct volcano, others have claimed that the volcano thing may not to be true. I'm certainly no geologist. Still, we all know that tectonic plates move, and 40 miles from MC is an active volcano, Popocatépetl, may be the same weak spot in the plate, which used to be the volcano of ancient Mexico City. The original ancient Indian settlement grew to become a city, called Tenochtitlan, around 1325, and then in 1430, became the dominant city-state of the Aztec Triple Alliance, made up of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, and Tlacopan. When the Spanish showed-up, about 200,000 Aztecs lived in what is now the center of Mexico City. When I was

there, the population of central MC was about eight million, and now with adjoining suburbs is now more than twenty-one million. The ancient Indians thought that the area of the lake had mystical powers, which probably had something to do with the indigenous hallucinogenic mushrooms and cacti. But maybe it is magical, since I felt especially good and comfortable, while living there. Aside from the occasional episode of violence with Knifeman, life was easy there. When the city was first founded, the Aztecs would dredge-up the shallow lake bottom to create gardens for crops, and to create islands on which to build their shelters. But then later, more dirt had to be carried in, from surrounding land areas, to continue that filling process. The dirt of the lake bottom was reputed to have been a natural fertilizer. Perhaps created by centuries of piled-up dead algae, and aquatic animals. Many volcanic lakes have quite a bit of biological life in them.

When the Spanish arrived, they helped the Indians to accelerate the process of converting the lake into useable land, by first working with them to haul in cart-loads of dirt, and so the ever-expanding Mexico City literally grew-up out of that shallow lakebed. The reason why they just didn't use the land

adjacent to said lakebed had a lot to do with the Indians' belief in the aforementioned magical powers of the lake, and maintaining face with the Indians, at least until they were ready to slaughter and enslave them. Then, the Spanish worked the ancient Indians, to help build Mexico City as a Spanish possession... shades of ancient Egypt, and the building of the pyramids.

The city is in a bit of a basin surrounded by mountains with considerable runoff. That situation, together with it being built on an ancient soggy lakebed is why Mexico City continues to sink, today. In fact, Mexico City is sinking several times faster than is Venice! Wonder what that little fact does to the real-estate values of MC? There's no telling how many ancient Indian artifacts have sunk deep into the soft magical mud, below the city. The aforementioned rocky area in the middle of the park, where I would nightly move the one hundred pound rock, to hide my dope, may have been one of the few original rock islands in the center of the ancient lake, since the immense rocks were certainly indigenous to the region, and considering their huge size and weight, they had to have been there, before the Indians, and so I liked to think that the rocky part of

the park, where I did my work, was the most magical part of the ancient Tenochtitlan. And, I've got to admit that in a way, working in the dark park, was at times magically mesmerizing, especially if I was loaded.

There is a reasonable possibility that rocky region in the park, may have been the location of the original Indian settlement. This possibility, came to me, while I was enjoying a doobie late one night. Once, when replacing the rock slab, I found a tiny piece of broken pottery, in the dirt near the rocks. It now sits in a small glass enclosed drum-table in my dining room. Said rocky hiding place was located down in a bowl-like area, which afforded me a comfortable work place, where I could breakdown my kilos of kush into ounces and cut my hash into estimated one to five gram rectangular cuboids, by lantern or candle light. The shallow six foot depression reduced the likelihood of my being seen, and as mentioned, the deep interior of the park was void of people, late at night. No homeless people slept deep in the jungle park, at least not in those days. In fact, I never saw any homeless people sleeping anywhere around the city, unlike in Mobile, Alabama, today. The Mexican peso was nearly dead,

yet there were no homeless people! That's food for thought.

Google Earth now shows me that the giant park has become filled with many additional structures, and just like the earth, it has much less green foliage, so it's now hardly a jungle, in fact it doesn't look much like a jungle at all. The same goes for the amazon rainforest. When I was in Mexico the Amazon rainforest was four million square kilometers, now it's three million. But, so what if a million square kilometers of rainforest had disappeared? No big deal... Right? Rainforests once covered 14% of the earth; now they cover 6%, and many experts estimate that the last remaining rainforests could be gone in less than 40 years! There's a very very small chance I'll still be alive to see that.

Sometimes when bagging-up the dope in the park, I'd occasionally hear a sound, so I'd extinguish my lights, and silently listen and peer into the darkness for a few minutes, to make sure no one was nearby watching me. Moreover, I'd listen for aircraft, but only once did I extinguish the light, in response to hearing an approaching plane. Being my own boss, and not having to worry about one of my dealers

turning me in, was comforting. Because of the low wholesale prices of illegal drugs in Mexico, I was pocketing considerable profit, simply selling to the tourists. Where I was making four to five times what it costs me to buy the drugs, the pharmaceutical companies make hundreds and thousands of times over their cost of manufacture. They are the true criminal dealers of the world.

My stupid ego soared over the idea of becoming financially independent in a foreign country, but it wasn't just the money; I was ecstatic over having escaped my mundane life in Mobile. Frequently, Rosa and I dined in fine restaurants, and I took cabs almost everywhere I went. Since I didn't want people to know how much money I was making, I told Rosa that I had a friend in the US, who was sending me small amounts of cash that he'd previously owed me for a loan, still Esteban knew about my regular trips into Tepito and the tin warehouse, but I'm fairly certain he kept my dealing a secret. He had many secrets more serious than mine. One secret involved the disappearance of a famous man named, Jesus Ibarra Piedra, who had been involved with a Mexican leftist urban guerrilla group. The guy apparently died, while I was in Mexico City. For all I know, he

may have ended-up in the same dark waters as Knifeman, in a big steamer trunk poked full of holes, and containing a few bricks, so it'd sink and not float-up.

Probably due to gruesome rumors about Mexican prisons, your average young America tourist was more than a little nervous about buying illegal drugs from Mexican drug dealers, but my being a fellow American made it relatively easy for them; hence, they were happy to pay my price. This potent little piece of fear worked to my advantage, allowing me to acquire a large ever-changing market of tourists, and not just American, but European and South American tourists, as well. The entire time I was in MC, I never ran into another American drug dealer, nor even heard of one. Every drug dealer, I saw in MC, was Mexican.

American weed smokers were a snap to spot and sell to. If you don't smoke weed, you may not realize just how many people actually indulge, and that most of them give-off countless telltale signals. Occasionally, I dealt with a few Europeans, some of whom, I meant through their American friends, who had become loyal clients. Most of the Europeans were going to school in America, as exchange

students. The Germans were extremely polite and tended not to question the price. They'd get straight to the point, without haggling. On the other hand, they often wanted me to procure special things, such as women, and even helping them with hotels and tourist services. To deal with such things I usually refer them to the concierge of my hotel. They apparently thought that I was 'visitor information' for the entire city. None of the Germans, I spoke with spoke Spanish, and I spoke hardly any German. One of my German customers referred these other Germans to me. One German spoke no English or Spanish. He just approached me on the street, and uttered the word, "Marijuana," and shrugged his shoulders, with a questioning look on his face. An easy hundred pounds overweight, and white as a fish belly, he clearly wasn't a Mexican cop, and would have been easy to outrun, so I immediately produced a baggy and raised my eyebrows, and he opened his wallet, allowing me to remove the correct number of bills. The big man nodded, then I nodded, and we parted our ways. It was a strange but easy transaction.

The English were matter-of-fact, careful, often with the occasional joke thrown in. The Italians were

over-the-top friendly, with lots of smiling. Oddly, even though they'd haggle the price with great intensity, after the deal they'd unexpectedly add a little something to my profit, as a tip. Sometimes, they'd take me out to eat, or to a bar for drinks. Italians seemed to seek friendship, more than they wanted the dope. The French seemed overly formal, a little aloof, or at times slightly grumpy. Occasionally, a French buyer would depart, leaving me with the clear impression, that I'd cheated them, even if they'd gotten a good deal. It made me wonder if perchance their cultural ego was still smarting from WWII, or some misplaced guilt for indeed some of the French had thrown-in with Hitler. On the other hand, at the start of Hitler's push into France, no one was really there to aid the poor French. Hitler's overwhelmingly army, air power, and navy quickly handed them their ass. Of course, Russia got the brunt of the Nazi war machine.

At that time, no country could have taken on the German war machine. After Pearl Harbor, it took the US quite a while to gear-up to manufacture its weaponry. The problem with that gear-up is that it never stopped. The military industries are now raping our national budget. It's like an attack dog

that once saved you from an attacker, but now it's a giant dog killing innocent people throughout your neighborhood. The annual defense budget of the United States is more twice that of Russia and China added together, so there goes: education and medicine, social security is tittering, maintenance of infrastructure is suffering, etc. If we not taking over the planet, why do we need that much power? Maybe we are preparing to conquer the earth. To generate business, they generate things like: propaganda that war is eminent, they actually start wars and keep them going, and the relentless attacks by our military drones, aircraft, and special forces create more terrorists. Feelings of nationalism is what allows this bullshit to continue. Nationalism is not patriotism; far from it, it is a dangerous bloody perversion thereof.

Retrieving the cash from under my hotel room carpet, I had again taken to burying my cash profits in other glass jars in the park. For obvious reasons, I was more than a little afraid to use the Mexican banks. If you think the *IRS* and the *FBI* are invasive of your privacy, take a hard look at Mexico's famous *Policia Federal Ministeral*. They're the pit-bulls of the Mexican financial world. Rumor has it that they

occasionally just take what they want, regardless of what the legal statutes have to say. If they come in your home and open your safe they may just empty it of all contents, no questions asked.

As time passes, I've come to realize that the old Jewish commander had indeed spoken the truth, about dirt banking. Always hide as much of your money as you can. Of course, if you invest in banks, brokerage houses, mutual funds, ETFs, real-estate, stocks, bonds, etc., you become transparent to the government. Invest in personally owned gold, silver, coins, jewels, your own cash business, cash-paying rental property, antiques, weapons, ammo, items for private resale, etc., and you are less apt to get financially hammered by the government. These are simple suggestions for flying under the radar, but there are many others. Even trading on Ebay creates a paper trail, whereas yard sales, do not. To avoid problems you can only either buy or sell an item on Ebay, but not both. Sell an antique to bought at an estate sale, or buy some jewelry, you're selling in a yard sale.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/baldwin/2011/02/07/eighteen-ways-to-get-tax-free->

income/

Being a foreign drug dealer turned-out to be a profitable choice, plus there was the exciting side benefit of periodic adrenaline releases. While I thought of myself as the only American dealer in Mexico City, the city was so heavily populated and spread-out, there could well have been others, and I never got wind of them. Nonetheless, most of my clients, Esteban's gang, and the folks at Tepito would have told me if they'd gotten wind of any other American dealers. They too thought me to be the only American dealing drugs in the city. I took perverse pride in that dubious distinction.

If I miss read a potential buyer, and they didn't want to purchase my wares, I simply left that area of the city, for fear they might have notified the police. After a couple hours of selling in a given city sector, I'd change locations, by at least ten blocks, for fear I'd been observed and/or reported. Survival was staying alert and regularly switching my selling locations. If I found an area with plenty of buyers, I had to avoid the temptation to remain there. In addition, I was determined not to make the mistake, I made in Mobile, the day of the trap-house, namely

letting myself get so fatigued, that I dropped my guard. The only person, who bought from me on a regular basis was the hotel concierge, where I lived. Mostly, he only wanted hash. Once, he made one special buy, a kilo brick of blond hash. In turn, the concierge sold to people, who stayed in the hotel. He also ran a couple of women, but not like a pimp; still, the women always tipped him, and he tried to screen their customers, so the women were less likely to get hurt. In those days, such things were expected of a hotel concierge. I never let him know, that I was a regular dealer, but just gave him the impression that I could get weed and hash, from some of my friends, who were students.

Once in a while, if I was selling further from the park, I'd take the whole daily stash, but if I did that, I'd find temporary hiding places in or near the area I was selling in; usually, down some alley without windows, and under some pile of trash, or in an abandoned store, or up inside the underside of some sink in a public restroom, or inside an abandoned structure. Finding the short-time hiding place was at times the hardest part of the job.

Mostly, I sold in the daytime, since the majority of the territorial drug dealers dealt at night.

Consequently, the undercover cops were more active, then. A daytime dealer was uncommon, but I was safer. The majority of the drug dealers didn't get out of bed, until the sun had dipped below the horizon, and the reds had vacated the clouds. A phalanx of narcs invariably frequented the bars, clubs, and especially the loud giant dance clubs, ergo I stayed clear of those places, when selling. Otherwise, they were interesting places. While I certainly could have better plied my trade there, the risks were plainly too high, especially from the other competitive and vindictive dealers. Instead, I spent my evenings with the Jew hating, but extremely sexy, Rosa. Frankly, if you steered clear of discussing religion or culture, she was at times, a pleasure to talk with.

My ounce bags of weed were easily hidden under my loose clothing, and usually sold faster than the proverbial five dollar hooker in Tijuana's Zona Centro. Mexico City is so huge, it was always easy to quickly find a new place to sell. After a few weeks, I knew the various regions of the city well enough that I no longer needed my little map. Changing locations, I tried to remain stealthy as possible, and initially hide my wares, then walked around, scouting the area for cops (uniformed and undercover), soldiers,

and for other more territorial dealers and gangs. Often, I'd park myself in a chair at a street-side cafe, buy a newspaper, sip on a coke, or some coffee, or a cold beer, while watching the street, its peoples, and its windows for a good ten or twenty minutes; then, I might also stroll the shops on intersecting streets, looking for other dealers and cops, before beginning my business. A few times, if I felt I was being scrutinized, not only would I move to another location, but I'd purchase a different t-shirt, and maybe a pair of cheap sunglasses, just incase a cop had called-in a report with my description.

Tourist attractions were one of the best and safest places to find customers. High-end restaurants and shopping districts were a runner-up. Plenty of wealthy women loved hash and weed. Sometimes my selling card was to simply hand them a penner (a super thin joint), as a flirtatious gift. Nine times out of ten, they'd ask me if I had any more. Those might be the days, when I'd have to tell Rosa that I'd been in Tepito visiting the three kings all night. Never having problems with initiating conversation, getting to know potential customers was a snap. Bringing up marijuana was as easy as 'accidentally' dropping a joint, then giving a small laugh, as I picked it up, and

casually mention how much better the Mexican ganja and hash were, than in the States. Those tricks generally did the job, if not, it was time to grab a cab and switch locations.

The above techniques allowed me to escape becoming a person of interest to the authorities, dealers, and gangs. Generally, I'd move around the city, using cabs, the subways, and sometimes just I'd walk or jog from place to place. I dressed poorly, but kept in shape. Those two things made me less prone to being robbed. In all likelihood, I could have out run 95% of the males who might give me chase. In my room at night and in the morning, I'd often do a lot of push-ups, sit-ups, and there was a tree, with a low hanging branch, in the park, I'd use for chin-ups every day. Military school and the wrestling team had addicted me to working-out and staying in shape. Indeed, there were many gyms in MC, I could have joined, but such places required that you form friendships, and getting a membership at a gym implied that you had money, so for safety's sake, I didn't join. Not to mention, that a significant portion of MC's police worked-out in those gyms, including the undercover cops.

During my walking trips back to the gigantic two

story rusty tin drug warehouse in Tepito, things went pretty much just as they had with Esteban. After a few trips, I began to call ahead to make sure that they had what I needed. Usually, Bicho answered and the conversation went as follows:

Me: It's me.

Bicho: Come on.

If they didn't have what I needed, Bicho would simply say, "Not yet," and hang-up. After a few times, the local inhabitants of Tepito had grown accustomed to me, so there were no questioning stares. I'd bring along pieces of candy bars and gum for the kids, and pass them out along the way. A pack of gum was three cents and a candy bar was a nickel. A few of the residents took to giving me friendly nods and waves, which I'd be sure to return, but that was as far as my friendship went with the inhabitants. The three kings had told me to not be too friendly with the residents, and I never quite understood why they made that comment. To avoid being robbed after leaving Tepito, while toting my newly purchased drugs, I'd use different exit routes. If you become too predictable and are known to carry drugs or money, you can quickly become a target. Robbery and kidnapping were all too common

in Mexico City. Even so, I don't know if all my precautions were necessary. For all I know, those time-consuming safety measures may have simply been a wasted effort. Using different entrances and exits would usually put me way out of my way, costing me a little walking time, or a cab fare. Oddly, there was one dark middle aged Latino, who'd I'd seen on three different occasions, when exiting Tepito. The guy seemed somewhat authoritative, and distinctive with the thumb missing on his lefthand. I described the guy to Quinto, and I never saw him again. The next time I saw Quinto, he winked at me. I don't think he hurt the guy, but probably just have him a warning.

[OBJ]



SANGRE POR SANGRE

(BLOOD FOR BLOOD)

Ever since I've known my dear Mom, she has had the peculiar gift of selective memory loss. You've probably heard people jokingly refer to 'selective memory loss,' as if it's only a funny myth, and I suppose most of such forgetfulness is indeed conveniently contrived lies, but having said this, my Mom may well be the all-time world record holder for genuinely possessing this discriminating lack of recall. If she claims not to remember, she has in fact completely blocked it from her conscious mind. She can expediently forget anything, which she deems to be unpleasant. Her mind does it automatically. It's like a subconscious reflex... completely involuntary. Some part(s) of her brain seems to do it spontaneously, just like the brainstem's *NTS* keeps her heart beating, her selective memory loss leaves her with only happy memories. For example, she can't remember the last few months of her father's life. She can't recall, Dad's death, nor can she recall what killed him. She thinks he died of a sudden heart attack, when in fact, Dad died over a period of a couple of weeks, while his lungs slowly filled with fluid, because of antibiotic-resistant pneumonia. The

first week he was in the hospital, and the final week, he spent in a nursing home. Moreover, she doesn't remember that Grandpa fell in the nursing home and broke his arm, and suffered greatly, just before he mercifully died of a stroke. I say mercifully because he'd been living in the stinky little room for years, suffering with Alzheimer's. There's no point in discussing those issues with Mom. It would only hurt her, if she did remember. Mom doesn't recall my soaping the school windows, when I was child in Spain, since that doesn't fit in with how she chooses to remember her supposedly well behaved son, not does she remember giving me the red hot pepper to eat, when I was a little kid. Mom believes she had a perfect driving record, and had never been in an accident. While indeed she never received a ticket, once she was coming off a highway exit, she had a minor fender-bender. It was her fault, ergo she's magically forgot about it. In her agile mind, it never happened. If I mention the accident, she accuses me of lying, so I just go with the flow. Having selective memory loss is indeed the key to happiness.

Mom's forgotten the few times, when she's been seriously sick in the hospital. Instead, she proudly tells people she's never been seriously ill. She barely

recalls that Dad gave me my daily allotments of alcohol, as a child, yet she can't block-out twelve years of childhood addiction, and my subsequent four years of suicidal depression. People are forever blocking, rearranging, and changing their memories, deciding which memories to visit to justify their existence, and which ones are too awkward or painful. In varying degrees, people edit memories to create their life's history.

Once when I was a small kid, age four, while visiting my Grandparents with Mom, a man tried to break into the house. In response to the sound made by his picking at the window screen, I awoke and saw the burglar using a screw driver, poked through the screen, trying undo the small hook latch, that secured the old wood framed screen. At first, I just wanted to watch him, trying to get through the window, and I was squinting through my eyelids, so the burglar couldn't tell that I was looking dead at him. When I realized that he was going to succeed in making his entrance, I reached out and grabbed Mom's hand to wake her. She looked at me, and I pointed-out the burglar. Mom sat-up in bed, and screamed bloody murder. At that moment the burglar, had one foot on a trashcan outside the

window, and the other foot on the windowsill. He was just sliding the window up, when Mom's voluminous scream filled the darkness and rattled the walls and windows. The explosive scream, so startled him, that he fell backwards into a big azalea bush, then he momentarily fumbled around in the bush, and finally got-up, to run away. Grandpa and Grandma came running into our room, and asked what happened, and Mom told them.

Grandpa called the cops and they came-out to the house, where Mom and I described what we'd seen. The man was never caught. Mom talked about the attempted burglary episode every day, until we left to go home. But once we were home, I told Dad about the attempted burglary, yet then Mom oddly claimed she couldn't remember it, and she wasn't lying. She'd accused me of making-up a story. She'd simply erased the unpleasant memory. Still, Dad sensed the truth, and just looked at me, smiled, shook his head, and shrugged his shoulders. Eventually, he knew about her selective memory thing. Later, when I asked Dad why Mom had claimed to have forgotten, he simply dodged my question. Undoubtedly, Dad realized that Mom blocked-out life's little unpleasantries. Mom's

opportune memory loss trick eliminated such things as: guilt, shame, fear, embarrassment, extended worry, failure, basically anything, which was too negative for her life's neurally recorded history.

Certain of the veterans suffering with *PTSD* are famous for selective memory loss, and while my Mom has never endured the stresses remotely approaching the magnitude of those of a combat vet, she nevertheless possessed disproportionately large and unrealistic fears. Most probably the parts of her brain, which manifest fear, are better developed than they are in most folks. Hence her incessant need for selective memory loss. When you're terrified of a small harmless sparrow, you can bet that you've got more than your share of fear. While I just said that some combat vets have selective memory loss, many have the opposite... memories which forever won't stop haunting them. On the other hand, there are many combat vets, who choose to revisit those memories, often in discussions with fellow vets. Memories are but circuits of neurons (nerve cells), largely in the hippocampi, and many of which hook-up to various emotional parts of the brain: happiness, fear, love, lust, anger, curiosity, hate, etc. Hence, memories are able to elicit certain feelings, and visa

versa.

As best as I can tell, I have a fairly decent memory and don't tend to block things out, but this is not to say that I have the wonderful photographic memory, which my Grandpa owned, for I certainly don't; but, it is to say that no matter how bad or unpleasant, no matter how drunk or stoned, no matter how sick, I remember things of great consequence. In spite of this claim, there is one small exception; a single dark event which remains as a baffling blank in my timeline... one incident, which to this day, I can't recall. That particular omission is probably one reason why I decided to no longer hangout with Esteban and his group, to leave Rosa and Mexico City, and to venture further south into Mexico. To the best of my knowledge, that's the only time, I've employed my Mom's comforting gift of selective memory loss.

In both a pragmatic and philosophical way, there is no true beginning, since there's no telling how many times the big bang has banged, or what might have existed before existence came into existence. In fact, I don't know of any religion that has attempted to sincerely address that conundrum. That small confusing statement is meant to more or less

demonstrate that the human brain, being a finite thing, can't truly appreciate the infinite. But it was questions like that, and the neurochemistry of depression, which literally drove me insane as a twelve year old, causing me to repeatedly stick the muzzle of the twelve gauge in my mouth. In comparison to infinity, I was clearly nothing. I certainly wanted to die, but paradoxically couldn't pull the trigger. The words suicidal depression, dread, terror, etc, don't begin to describe how I felt, but then I suppose words never actually completely relate what they're intended to describe. Words, if properly executed, can adequately describe technical things, but not so much the feelings. For each person, time begins with their first memories, and those early memories arrive via their parents' DNA, in the form of womb dreams (how to ID mom's nipple and what to do with it, fear of falling, fear of spiders, fear of snakes, fear of loud noises, etc.). Perhaps at the time that inevitable death arrives, one's entire life has become an ordered sequence of memories stored in the brain's hippocampi, a bunch of interconnected neurons, not too different from these ten books, but soon, all those memories will be gone like a fart in a tornado.

You could say that my aforementioned one-time memory loss began one night, when I was still at Esteban's apartment, when a rather solemn looking stranger came knocking at Esteban's door. I'd known Esteban almost a year by then, and it was not the first time, I'd known a stranger to come knocking at his place. The newcomer certainly looked like he might have been a gang member. I'd never seen him before, and he refused to come inside. *Maybe he's a messenger. It's probably something to do with Esteban's security work.* With his hand in his right pocket, Esteban cautiously stepped-out onto the small concrete portico and talked with the caller, but just for a minute or two, then the stranger solemnly nodded, turned, and departed. I wasn't too sure how long the stranger was there because I got-up to go to the bathroom to pee, and I was stoned on my ass.

When I came out of Esteban's bathroom, he'd stepped back into the room, and looked mildly serious and distracted, so I figured he'd gotten some interesting news, but I was too hammered to give it much thought, and assumed he'd tell me, if he wanted me to know. At the time, I had been sitting with Rosa, on one of the thin mattresses, propped-up against the wall, next to the radio with the bent

antenna, listening to tunes. Rosa was trying to finish-off what was left of a particularly potent little roach, without burning her fingers.

The radio was playing some fast paced macho sounding classical flamenco guitar solo. Every now and then, I noticed the discussion between Esteban and his group, but it didn't seem too important. Neither Rosa nor I had a clue what was being said, but what they were discussing was about to have a radical influence on my wasted existence, and cause me to invoke my Mother's talent for selective memory loss. But then, the group's mood, began to change and so it seemed that perhaps the stranger had brought some sobering news with him. Still, I didn't give it much thought, other than the fact that the rapid paced flamenco music seemed to match their new mood. Wrongly, I figured it was something about some upcoming security job for Esteban's group. It wasn't but a few minutes later, that Rosa checked her watch, got up, gave me a kiss and a wink, and walked out the door to go work at Mai's Chinese carry-out, and I recall thinking that it would be four hours, before she'd be free, and we could go to my place.

Rosa too had failed to gauge the significance of

the visiting stranger. After Rosa had left, Esteban began herding all the guys out the door. The girls were apparently staying. He then looked at me and motioned for me to join them. Having been in the apartment for hours, I assumed we were all going on a walk, for a little fresh air, or maybe we were going to a club or a bar. I was just happy to go outside, yet the other guys didn't seem so happy. *They're in a bad mood, tonight.*

I honestly had no clue where we were going, but being extremely stoned, I didn't care. It seemed like we walked for roughly three miles, without much talking, when we entered into a fairly dismal commercial district. The buildings and parking lots were empty. There were ten of us, and I was still assuming that we had just gone out for something to do... that the guys were sick of sitting in the apartment, and perchance we were headed for some place involving music and loose women. *Being in the apartment has bummed these guys out. They're not even talking.* The temperature of the hot day was dropping, and a cool breeze had picked-up. It felt good.

Right then, a smell like meat on the grill hit my nose, and I felt a hunger pang, accompanied by the corresponding saliva flow. *There must be a restaurant*

nearby. God, I'm hungry. As we walked, the street lights became fewer, till there were none. The city blocks had no homes and apartment buildings. There were only closed-up office buildings, small factories, and cheap dark warehouses, which no longer appeared to be in use. Heavily stoned, I began to wonder why we'd gone to such a dismal area of the city, with no people, no music, no food, etc. *We're probably just cutting through this area to get where we're going.* The dismal little street was filthy, and by that, I mean that the street not only had piles of litter and garbage, along its' sides, but actual sandy soil, owing to what had blown out of the vacant dirt parking lots, of the defunct factories and warehouses. *This area is awfully depressing!* At one point, we stepped-up out of the street, and up onto the decrepit narrow cracked concrete sidewalk. At Esteban's suggestion, everyone in the group began to walk single-file, spaced about six feet apart. *Why are we walking like this?* At that point, I still had no idea what was going on. But again, I never thought to ask, and just wanted to get to our destination. I thought that perhaps we were cutting through a gang's territory, and that was how it's supposed to be done, single file. But being pleasantly stoned, I was not up for worrying, and was just glad to be outside the stuffy

little apartment and going somewhere.

We'd reached a place where the only light came from the half moon, and the distant city lights, so all the buildings and the street were cast in various shades of gray. *This has got to be the gloomiest area in Mexico City.* Esteban then motioned for everyone to stop, and sit down. *Time to take a breather, I guess.* Still spaced-out apart, we sat on a small grimy three foot tall brick wall, bordering the decrepit old sidewalk, and no one was talking. *What the hell is going on? Why is everyone so serious looking?*

We were seated facing the empty grimy little dark street, in front of an old one story nondescript industrial-sized furniture store; at least, that's what the sign over the entrance said. The building across the street was a commercial laundry. I couldn't tell if all the buildings in that area had been closed for months or just for the evening. Everyone just silently staring-out at the bleak street. *Maybe the guys aren't feeling so good.* Most of the guys lit-up cigarettes. Not another soul was in sight. Not four feet, directly in front of where I was sitting, was a fairly smelly pile of trash, heaped upon the five foot wide piece of ground, between the cracked old sidewalk and the curb. I was the only one in the group with a stinky

trash-heap in front of them. *This has got to be the armpit of MC, the last place anyone would want to come.* That's when I heard the muted scrapings and squeals coming from inside the trash pile. *The rats are fighting over some piece of the garbage... evolution at its' finest.*

The mound of trash contained things such as: a broken door, missing its hinges and lock, a half dozen plastic and paper bags of fetid garbage, a large cracked plastic flowerpot, a couple torn paisley couch cushions, a tiny worn car tire, on a very rusty slightly bent car wheel, an old upside-down broke kitchen table, with only three of its four legs, a broken medicine-cabinet with a cracked mirror, a rusty chrome percolator, a deco ceramic lamp, which except for a bent harp, didn't look too bad, etc. *I could fix this lamp.* As mentioned, this debris came with the aforementioned rummaging rats. In addition to the stench of garbage, I detected the sharp nauseating smell of raw sewage, coming from somewhere nearby. *One minute, I smell delicious grilled meat, and now it's garbage and sewage.* It was definitely an oppressive little district, surrounded in the distant loud hodgepodge of the colossus metropolis, with all its diversity of buildings, races,

businesses, and cultures. *What the hell are we doing here? Let's get out of here.* We were in a filthy manufacturing district, perhaps reminiscent of the depressing 1920s' industrial period of the US. Being stoned and listening to the sounds of the hungry rooting rats, I began thinking how the small animals were amazing creatures... bona fide survivors, for there aren't many places on earth where rats couldn't exist.

http://www.domyownpestcontrol.com/all-about-rats-c-21_577.html

A few years later, I'd watch a research rat, while successfully escaping, jump to the ground from a building seven floors up. The furry brown creature would hit with a belly-flop on the concrete patio, roughly 90 feet below. After a motionless moment, the rodent came to and ran away, seemingly unaffected. The most common types of rat are the black, *Rattus rattus*, and the brown, *Rattus norvegicus*. It appears that rats can adjust to almost any environment. As far as biology is concerned, the rat's ability to adapt is more than impressive.

A rat can live and swim in a sewer, and feed off diseased carcasses, as easily as it can from fresh food. Consequently, the little rat must have something of a near bulletproof immune system. There are rats that live in frozen climates, and sweltering hot humid jungles. There are rats that live in trees, and rats that live under ground. In the Chinese calendar, I was born in the year of the rat. Even I first became aware of this as a child, I was saddened. I would rather have been born in the year of the tiger. But the more I learned about the rat, the better I felt.

Looking up from the trash pile, a movement off to my right caught my eye. Something was a ways up the street. On that poorly lit narrow street, but in the opposite direction, from which we'd just come, and on the other side of the street, I discerned there was a line of young Mexican males, walking in single file, just as we had done moments before. As the group neared, I could see there were ten in number. *What are they doing, here?* As previously mentioned, there were also ten of us. The unknown ten finally stopped, turned and faced us, lining-up on the sidewalk directly across the street, and spaced out just as we were. Then, I noticed that each pulled-out of their pocket and held a knife! Their gazes were firmly

fixed on us. My doped-up brain finally began to put things together. Looking to my right and left, I saw that each of Esteban's group was standing up, and each was also holding a blade. *Holy shit! Why did Esteban bring me? He just assumed I have Knifeman's weapon.* This was to be a preplanned knife fight, but I come to it without a knife! In the dim light, I could vaguely make out that one of the guys across the street was the same guy, who just been at Esteban's.

Foolishly, I'd never bothered to ask where we were going, and Esteban had evidently wrongly assumed I had brought along Knifeman's knife. If I'd known that a knife fight had been forth coming, I would have probably not come along, but had I declined at that point, Esteban's group would have been placed at a disadvantage... ten against nine. Esteban was looking at me, wondering why I had no knife. My oversight was owing to my dope-filled mind, plus I'd been sitting by the blaring radio in Esteban's apartment, and then I'd gone to the restroom, and so hadn't heard any of the discussions.

The knife-welding men across the street, were unknown to me, except for the one, who in the darkest resembled the stranger at the door. At this point, I hadn't a clue why the fight was happening.

Maybe, this is Knifeman's crew and they finally figured-out who'd killed him! Esteban knew that previously I'd always carried the knife, which Knifeman had stuck in my knee. But for some reason, that day I had forgotten to bring it. *Holy shit! I left it on the dresser in my room.* For a minute Esteban's group and the guys across the street just stared at each other. It wasn't hard to figure what was about to follow. Right then, I felt a powerful fear, but realized that for survival's sake, I had to abandon the feeling, and when I succeed in doing that a small epiphany bubbled to the surface. Swiftly, I stepped forward right into that smelly trash pile, and heard the rats scurrying away from my feet, then I tried to break off one of the table legs, and quickly realized it was the type that had to be unscrewed. I grabbed it tightly and twisted. I was not going into a knife fight unarmed. The wooden table leg was just over three feet long, and was round tapered, and fairly hefty. *It must be made of hardwood, like a baseball bat.* Hurriedly, I unscrewed it, Esteban glanced my way, looking highly annoyed.

Befriend a psychopath, and reap the whirlwind.

Choose Carefully by Moe R. Arilla

“What the hell you doing, asshole?” Esteban asked, loud enough for the men across the street to hear him. He was plainly irritated that I had broken with gang protocol. The gang across the street also seemed mildly disturbed by my acquisition of the table leg, but they said nothing. All of them were looking at me unscrewing the table leg. So, I yelled.

“I didn’t know I was going to be needing a knife. I left it at home. I’ve smoked too much marijuana, and no one told me where we were going to a knife fight.” If I was going to be fighting for my life, I wasn’t the least bit concerned about appearances, so I announced this loud enough for all to hear.

My comment, caused a couple of sarcastic chuckles across the street, but their laughter quickly died away, since things were not proceeding in a friendly fashion. Never would I have imagined that my life could change so fast. Reflectively, everyone knew it was time to begin, and we each looked in the direction of our respective adversary, the person directly in front of us. It was an old fashioned formal gang fight. Most likely, gangs don’t roll like that anymore. In fact now, it’s most likely guns, not... ambushes, and drive-byes.

That night, it was like the gates of hell had opened and suddenly the devils were standing across the street. Again, I realized that the fear had to be shoved aside, and so I convinced myself that I preferred the table leg to a knife. Vaguely, I recall thinking the guy in front of me looked like a real asshole. His face was filled with an unjustified rage, unless it was his contrived game face, but this was no game. Besides, in a fight it didn't matter in the slightest how mean his face looked like. What counted was strength, and speed... nothing else. Following Esteban's cue, I stepped around the trash pile and into the dimly lit dirty little street, with Esteban's men to my right and left, while the ten men on the other side did likewise. I was only three or four steps from engaging, and so I took a deep breath, since available blood oxygen is always a critical variable in any fight. My only serious experience with the world of fighting had been a couple of clumsy determined childhood fights, half dozen fist fights in military school, a season of wrestling, that day I kicked the lifeguard in the nose during my pool test, knocking out the ambulance attendant on the beach, and the night I was forced to choke-out Knifeman. I sure didn't know how to fight with a knife, but I was well coordinated, played

baseball, and pound-for-pound was strong and fast.

Maintaining one's cool plays a critical role in any fight, but especially when facing a deadly threat. Blocking fear should be involuntarily reflexive, but for me it required conscious effort. *I could use a drink.* Not being fearless, I was content to temporarily avoid the fear; just long enough to get through the fight. *I need to lead-out with a fake move, then a violent determined move.* My opponent steeped toward me, appeared to be in a rage, and didn't look like your typical Mexican, but pig-eyed and lighter skinned. I mused that we all occasionally do the wrong thing for the right reason, and then I thought of the baseball phrase, '*batter-up,*' as my eyes locked onto his knife arm and his head, and that's exactly where my conscious memory stops. Although there was the feel and sound of something cracking. No doubt, what I sustained was some form of weird amnesia, since after that, I have no clear memory of my silent shadowy opponent, other than seeing his approach, and the gleam of his knife. Mostly, my nemesis remains just a colorless dark stocky figure, with an angry expression. There is a vague memory, about the cracking sound, and the thought of my 'finishing the job.'

Guilt is a cruel and insistent beast, so it's best to kill it quickly, and without mercy.

Notes from the Dark Asylum by Mosley

Rae Willam

The next substantial memory, after that strange confrontation, is of my awakening the next morning. As I cautiously rolled to the side of the bed to get-up, the empty tequila bottle surprised me by rolling up against my spine. Heading to the bathroom, I threw-up in the commode, and periodically repeated that miserable process for a couple hours, that morning. There's something to be said for the first couple of minutes right after you puke. I found a fairly long and deep cut on the top of my left index finger, but had no idea how it got there. Later, I'd wash and taped it, with the same tape I'd used on my knee.

After my first sudden bout of puking, I tried to remember what happened the night before, but I didn't try too hard. Something stopped me, when I got to the phrase 'batter-up.' *Maybe this is tequila-induced amnesia, or maybe I have Mom's selective-memory-loss.* Tequila has never been my preferred

drink, and to this day, I don't know how or where I'd gotten the bottle. Thank God the shower never ran out of hot water, since for half that day, I stood under the soothing warmth, and occasionally sipped a little, trying to rehydrate my mind and body. It was one of the world's worst hangovers, and reminded me of my first year away at college, standing under the shower, after a hard night of drinking.

That day, I kept bumping-up against those few hazy memories of the night before, yet never made complete sense of them. My recollections have never gotten me beyond 'batter-up.' Maybe I dreamed about that fateful night, but if so, I couldn't recall the dream, per se. One good thing about not remembering is that I didn't have to deal with flashbacks, which for me normally accompanied dramatic events. Since that night, I haven't touched a drop of tequila. Even the smell seems revolting. In fact, as odd as this may sound, I've developed a slight dislike for people, who drink it.

One of the things that bothered me the most about not remembering is not being able to recall how I disposed of the table leg, since it probably had my fingerprints on it, and perhaps it was smeared, with blood and brain tissue. For some reason, I think

I got rid of the table leg, after I had jogged far away from the area, but I'm not at all certain. Maybe, I buried it in Chapultepec Park. After being somewhat recovered from the tequila hangover, it wasn't until that evening, that hunger drove me out of the apartment in search of food.

Perchance that night in that dingy gloomy commercial district, I was so frightened that I just stopped remembering. But regardless of the reason, just like my dear Mom, I fortunately have no recollection. Can you be prosecuted for something of which you have no memory? Moreover, if you're a religious soul, can your eternal soul be judged by such an absence? Perhaps, my loss of memory was due to the collision of my flimsy moral framework, with the deadly necessity. Maybe, my long dormant conscious awoke and tried to assert itself that fateful night, yet something tells me that I likely swung that table leg, more than I needed to. During a life and death struggle you hope for two things: to live, and to never have to confront your opponent, again. Oddly enough, I've never heard of both of those variables together discussed in a novel or Hollywood cinema; it's always just the former.

There's got to be a healthy reason why people

blockout memories, and so I've never really understood the need to psychiatrically uncover irksome memories. Maybe when I'm on my death bed, my memories of that night will come flooding back, just as God gives me the eternal stink eye, and cast me off to sizzle and scream, but only for eternity. Perhaps with a hypnotist, I could unearth those missing memories, but probably it's best to leave them be I'm ninety-nine percent certain that almost every psychologist thinks I need to rediscover that night, but something tells me those folks are all wrong, and half the time, they don't know what they're doing. Repression is one of the big money makers, for the psychoanalysis crowd.

Psychotherapists of various sorts seem to invariably believe that it's best to uncover lost memories, no matter why they've been repressed, as if there is no way that the brain knows what's best for itself.

No doubt, there may be a few times when they're right, but it seems reasonable that the brain buried those memories for some reason, which just might surpass the wisdom of psychologists or psychiatrists, so I'm perfectly content to leave those remembrances on the ocean floor. Years later, I'd work in a hidden lab, inside the schizophrenic ward of a hospital. The

department employed about forty to fifty psychiatrists and psychologists. At best, one of them appeared to possess a normal personality, an older female. About ninety percent were serious pill poppers. That is not to say, that most of them weren't good people, but it is to say that most were unbalanced in significant ways.

Asylums are called looney bins, largely because of their staff.

The Psyche Rewritten by Mel Oray

Wills

Even though I couldn't recall that nighttime fight on the grungy little street, for several nights thereafter, I meant my Dad on the old abandoned runway. That's the only time in my life where that dream appeared several consecutive nights. Each time, the mirror finished aluminum DC-3 was sitting on the concrete strip, in the orange light of sunset. The props were spinning but they made no sound. My brief conversation with Dad varied only slightly, but invariably there was one or more dead bodies on the plane needing to be dumped-out, once we were

over the ocean. Unlike in real life, my Dad actually appeared to enjoy my presence, and so in the dream it always felt like a great burden had been lifted from my shoulders. In general, it's always been like that for me... the worse my life gets, the better my dreams tend to be. Something tells me that it's the opposite for most people.

Every now and then, I still have that airplane dream, although it's been about six months. I fear losing that dream. Dad never told me he loved me, until just before he died, but his statement was too reflexive, too mechanical, since it only came right after I told him that I loved him. Sometimes in the DC-3 dream, he'll hand me a bottle of whiskey and smile, and in the dream, I'm actually able to smell and taste the sweet bourbon. With that sip, I'd feel good on so many levels. In the comfortable dream, my life's many failures are wonderfully erased.

"It's about time that you stepped up to the plate, Joey... batter-up! Time to throttle-up, and grab some sky." Dad said.

By this comment, I think Dad meant he was glad that I'd finally killed someone, who deserved killing. Finally I'd done what Dad had always told me to do; kill someone who desperately needed killing.

“Batter-up, Dad.” I answered him in the dream.

My Dad telling me that he loved me, in all truth, was the last thing he ever said. He literally died, without uttering another word. Days before he spoke those words, he'd had a stroke which negated his ability to speak, yet he still managed to tell me he loved me. Those last words, be they sincere or otherwise, crushed me, and sent me to my hands and knees, crying like a baby, on the dirty linoleum floor, next to his hospital bed. Perhaps his final words were only a consoling lie, designed to help me finish out my pointless life; yet clearly, I'm undeserving of his final three words. If indeed it was a lie, I think it's the only lie Dad ever told. Though Dad seemed to welcome his own death, like an old friend; still, it shattered me, because I never managed to attain his approval. I'd failed him, in so many ways, and although he didn't know about all my nefarious deeds, he certainly sensed them. He was no fool. He was the kind of person, who was content to allow people the illusion that he didn't know their true intentions.

Crazy as this may sound, after my Dad's death, I think that I have sensed his spirit in certain animals which fly, i.e., birds and flying insects. They watch

me in a friendly comforting sort of way. The first time this occurred was right after he had died... the very afternoon of the morning he passed. A snowy white egret was flying, just outside the passenger window of my car. While these birds tend to love swamps and open fields with cattle, they habitually avoid people and traffic. A few minutes after Dad had passed away, I had just barely started driving, and my car was only traveling about fifteen miles per hours, when there was the large white egret, flapping its wings and doing its level best to fly barely outside my car's passenger window.

When I thought, '*I wonder if that bird is Dad?*' the bird actually turned its head and briefly looked directly at me, then nodded its head, fanned-out its large white wings, extended its legs, and gracefully landed, next to the road. It watched me drive away, as I watched it, in my rearview mirror. Devastated, I continued driving. Then I thought of the many people, who'd told me that they'd seen their deceased loved one. Every time I'd heard such a claim, I'd chalked it up to a wishful hallucination, but the mysterious white bird I saw was indeed real, standing along side the road, in my rearview mirror, after I'd blinked and shook my head. *I guess it's*

appropriate that Dad comes back as a bird; he was a flyer. Before that afternoon, I'd only seen egrets standing in swampy places and fields, generally well removed from a road or highway. That snowy white bird was not one of the small cattle egrets, but the taller white crane-like specie. The following week, exact same day and time, again I was driving the very same route, and was at the same location. I was wondering if I was going to have another encounter with the mysterious snowy white egret, yet when I got to the same spot of roadway, and I briefly glanced out the passenger window, there was no bird. However, when my eyes again track forward onto the highway in front of the car, I saw a small brownish gray object in the air, which appeared to be about floating about four feet above the highway, but a quarter mile away. It was directly in front of my car, and looked to be slightly larger than a softball. I could tell the object possessed a rapid oscillating motion. *What is that?*

Suddenly I realized, that whatever it was, it was aimed directly at my car. It was coming at me head-on, and moving fast. Suddenly, I saw that wings extended from its' sides, which accounted for the oscillation of the object. Moments before it reached

me, the object elevated its flight path ever so slightly, and zoomed barely over my windshield, clearing the roof of my car by less than a foot. At that same moment, I saw that the object was a duck, pumping its wings at a high rate of speed. It had been doing a semi-kamikaze run straight at my windshield! The duck seemed to be flying for all it was worth. It buzzed my car and kept right on going, but as it shot above the chrome brow of my windshield it emitted a loud friendly, 'quack!' Studying my rearview mirrors, I couldn't spot the duck, again. Perhaps, it just had zoomed straight-up, or off to one side. I pulled the car to the side of the road, and got out to look for it, but the duck was not to be seen.

These weird Dad-related occurrences kept happening for about six months, every week or two, but after the duck, they began happening in different locations. Some of these spiritual Dad events were so uncanny, I don't mention them, for fear that you find this to be too ridiculous for even fiction. Maybe it was Dad hanging around just long enough for me to better adjust to his death, letting me know he was okay. He obviously wasn't burning forever, but he did so enjoy flying, and with each bizarre little appearance he had his own living set of wings.

Through the years, a few times I've mentioned the unexpected gang-fight on the shadowy street in Mexico City, but in polite company, I always changed the story, concluding with the statement that both groups just stared at each other, then walked away, and there was no fight, since the truth doesn't sit well with most folks, because the truth is probably much more bloody, than the polite little lie. Too many only enjoy violence in the movies. It was the same thing I did with Evangeline; not mentioning her death, but just saying that her dad had broken us up. Most folks of polite society really don't like hearing about death or violence. They especially don't want to hear it uttered, from the lips of someone they know; just on the silver screen, or the pages of a best seller.

Oddly enough, people usually smile and seem to believe the harmless lie, about everyone in the two gangs simply walking away. But, could you in your wildest dream, imagine two rival Mexican gangs, having traveled all that way across town, facing each other with knives drawn, to then just change their minds and walk away? Even so, people want to believe that placating little untruth. It usually gets a few chuckles.

Many times, I have tried to remember more of what happened that night on that dim dirty street, but it's always been to no avail. Maybe the amnesia was due to the wacky weed or the tequila, but I seriously doubt it. Part of Mom's DNA, possibly had some memory deleting/blocking allele of some sorts, which may have conveniently allowed me to erase the memories of that night. Once recovered from the miserable tequila hang-over, I felt fine, but like I said, all I could remember was right up to 'batter-up,' and the shadowy guy walking toward me with the knife in his hand, and there was also his ugly expression; nothing after that, save a vague idea about finishing the job, and young men shouting.

For a couple of days, I had no desire to go to Esteban's place. At the end of the second day, Rosa finally came to my room late at night, but said nothing about the night with the table leg, yet she didn't act any different. *She must not know about what happened that night.* Even though I'd struggled to remember, and wanted to know more about what happened that night, I didn't ask her any questions. The following day, when we returned to Esteban's, no one mentioned the events of that night. Everyone acted exactly as they had each time I'd visited them

before, and they seemed genuinely happy to see me... friendly and filled with an abundance of good will. Whatever I had done that night, the gang clearly had approved of. Everything seemed to be business as usual. Although, it did appear like a couple of guys were missing, and some guys were sporting bandages on their face and arms. Whatever I did, or didn't do that night, was apparently good with them. For all I knew, the two missing guys may have been okay, but just not there that day, because they were off doing something else. After all, it was not a requirement to meet every night at Esteban's. In that respect, the gang was fairly loose-knit. The guys only seemed to coordinate with each other, when there was something important like a security job to be done. They each knew where each other lived, worked, and hung-out.

The gang members were great about helping each other. They forever were offering each other words of encouragement and compliments, sharing food, which someone in their family had cooked. They helped each other with family and work projects, as well they shared their weed and booze. Unlike the gangs of today, none of them bragged about their individual abilities. In many ways, the

guys were a better family, than many biological families. After all, my wife had hated her mother, and my Dad had detested his father, and my dear mother hated her mother, as well as most of her sisters. In addition, my Grandparents forever remained apprehensive of me.

A couple days after the ‘batter-up’ night, I’d decided to leave Mexico City, so I never got the complete read on what had happened that evening. Besides, if you don’t know the truth, you don’t have to endure it. During my last night with Rosa, I didn’t mention that I was leaving the next morning, but days prior, I’d purchased my bus ticket, and the day before, I’d removed all the cash from my underground jars in Chapultepec Park. Besides, while she was fun, I didn’t really respect her, and by then I’d been in the city for almost a year, and had grown too accustomed to her.

Dope wise, I only had about a half pound of newspaper-wrapped weed, still left, and yet to be sold. The next morning, I’d carry it in the outside pocket of my blue cloth suitcase under the famous yellow shirt, that I’d stolen off the clothesline, the day of the trap house incident. To transport all that cash safely, I’d packaged the money into taped paper-

wrapped bundles, so they could then be taped around my waist and thighs, under my loose fitting clothing. It was considerably more money, than I come into Mexico with. Rosa had told me, that early the next morning, she had to accompany her father to court. According to her lies, he had failed to pay a minor traffic ticket. Her lies were okay with me; after all, it was her dad, and I was leaving to travel south, anyway. More than likely, her father was indeed going to court, but probably for something considerably more grievous, than a ticket, and most likely she was going there to be a character reference, or to plea with the judge about the length of her dad's prison stay. Her dad had been fair enough with me, but just barely, still I'm sure I only got to see the nice soft snowy tip of that deadly flinty hard iceberg.

With one last lingering kiss, I put Rosa into a cab, around five that morning, so she could go home to get ready for her dad's eight o'clock court appearance. Lying, I told her that later that night, I'd come by her job at Mai's Chinese carry-out. And thus, like a coward, I avoided the awkward final goodbye. Basically, I had repeated the same spineless exit technique, I'd used on my good wife, only this time,

without the handwritten note.

“See you this evening at Mai’s, Rosa. Good luck with your dad’s traffic ticket. I’m sure everything will turn-out okay. Tell him I said, ‘hello.’”

As mentioned, when I was a child, my military family would move every one to three years, and I’d repeatedly leave all my friends, and then make new ones, so leaving people never bothered me much. As a result, I became the master of temporary friendships, and of making new friends, as well as avoiding uncomfortable goodbyes. My parents would just throw a party, everyone got half in the bag, then Mom and Dad would say their farewells, then the people exited the house.

“Maybe, we’ll run into each other at the next duty station. Goodbye, for now. Good luck!”

Once at the new location, I’d show-up in another school, sit back, watch, and decide who to be friends with, and those who were best to be avoided. I’d emulate things such as: clothes, behavior, catch phrases, favorite topics of discussion, regional accents, etc., and thereby insinuate myself into some group or groups, until time to leave, to the next duty station. I had no real problem in emulating and

agreeing with the beliefs of others, no matter how much I might have disagreed, since I knew I'd soon be gone.

You must be shapeless, formless, like water. When you pour water in a cup, it becomes the cup. When you pour water in a bottle, it becomes the bottle. When you pour water in a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can drip and it can crash. Become like water my friend.

Bruce Lee

It could be that Mr. Lee's quote better applies to various relationships than it does fighting. By regularly moving every year or two, as well as the fact that I was an only child, who didn't have a lot of interaction with his parents, I'd learned not to suffer with the loss of friends. I did somewhat relish meeting new people, and experiencing new beginnings. Except for Evangeline, my parents, and my child, there had been no point in establishing a long-term affiliation, and in that respect, human beings took on a provisional status. In fact, after knowing a person for more than a year or two, I'd

usually become acutely weary of them, and looked forward to meeting new people. This was especially true for my sexual interest in females.

Apparently, I've never learned the value of real friendship, or perchance there is just a tad too much of the psychopath in me, or possibly a little of both. After putting that last commentary to paper, I have no doubt, that you realize there's something wrong with me, especially since I'm still okay with being that way. As stated, my daughter, parents, and Evangeline are the only exceptions to my temporary social perspective.

While this ever-changing situation made me fairly adroit at fitting-in, and conforming to what my new acquaintances deemed acceptable, perhaps, in the process, I lost some of myself, or just never developed it in the first place. Clearly, this situation and my behavior don't speak well of me, and no doubt there's some psych term for it, something in that ridiculously overly wordy, and unduly worshipped, DSM-5, which tries to describe states of neurochemistry and neurophysiology, by using simple psychological terms. Consequently, at best, the document can only represent the allusion of understanding of what's actually occurring in the

human brain, yet today's shrinks like to believe that those mere words are, in some manner, representative of actual science. In my ignorant opinion, the DSM-5 is only a half step removed, from witch doctoring. To describe any particular cognitive condition/behavioral pathology, one needs a way of relating the pattern of firing and non-firing nerve cells, their locations and numbers, as well as their chemistry. While you may think that is too complicated, with the various forms of neuro-imaging, and the proper applications of math, it's possible! It's only for the simplest of psychiatric conditions that word-therapy is going to help, and yes, good advice can help for minor conditions; not for longterm: schizophrenia, bipolar depression, borderline personality disorder, severe OCD, etc.

My weird short-term social mind-set continued for long after I left home, and almost certainly somehow figured into the end of my marriage. I only knew my lovely wife for a total of five years, before leaving her, but then, five years was a record of sorts for me. I was determined to make a go of it, but just couldn't change my upbringing. Five years for me was like fifty years for most folks. While writing this hodgepodge, I looked my ex-wife up on *Facebook*. In

her photo, she's holding a glass of what looks like wine, and still looks attractive, though of course she's older, and by the sorrow in her gaze, I could see that her life hasn't been overly kind. Yet looking at her photo, I happily thought that I could still sense the weed smoking dreamer in her, the younger woman I once knew.

Life was not always good to her. Three bad husbands, and a biased mother, who preferred Margo's brother, didn't help to boost Margo's confidence. Though it was absolutely necessary for my sanity, leaving my dear wife had been incredibly difficult; whereas, leaving Rosa, in Mexico City, was a comparative snap. In fact, I was glad to leave her.

Checking-out of the hotel that morning, I lied to the desk clerk, telling him that I had phoned the United States, to check on some friends, and found-out that one of them was in the hospital, because of a serious auto accident, and that he was in danger of losing a leg, from rolling a car. I went on to say that he was in a coma, and I had to leave immediately, and was going to the train station to try to get transportation north, back to Monterey, where I'd left my car. Trying to look desperate, I even told him to tell Rosa, if she came looking for me, that I loved

her, felt bad about having to leave without a proper goodbye, and that I'd be back as soon as I could, but didn't know exactly when that would be.

Sometimes the more outlandish the lie, the more persuasive it can be. Fabricating that lie was ever so useful, since most likely Rosa would come-by the hotel, asking where I'd gone, and the desk clerk would certainly tell her what I'd said. The strategically planted deceit was designed to prevent her from feeling rejected. Something told me that head-strong Rosa was not a woman, who'd handle reject well. Who does? Hell hath no fury, like a head-strong Mexican woman's scorned; hence, the need for my judiciously planted fabrication.

At that time and even now, I wonder just how far I've strayed from society's moral norm. This depressing thought is most common, when I first awaken in the morning, before I get some confidence building caffeine, coursing through my slowly hardening cerebral arteries. Self-loathing is generally what drives me to the coffeepot each morning. Part of my decision to leave the sexy and beautiful Rosa was that I knew that she wanted out of that miserable apartment with her dad, and she thought that maybe I could liberate her, and take her away

from the world of poverty, to the mystical United States, and marry her. However, the more I'd gotten to know her, the scarier that possibility became.

With her dad going to court, there was the distinct possibility he was going to be locked away, which undoubtedly would have caused her to apply more pressure on me to commit to her, to move-in together, and to marry her. As a result, I pulled in my arms and legs, said a prayer to Martin-Baker, reached for and pulled the yellow and black ejection handle. Financial desperation or just natural born greed can turn some women, as well as some men, into convincing Oscar-winning actors, emulating genuine love, while even they believe they're being honest. It's often just DNA orchestrating neurophysiology, instinctually constructing the requisite gray mush, to set things-up for successful procreation and the survival of the subsequent offspring... the only thing evolution truly cares about... passing on those ever-greedy nucleotide sequences. Juxtapose that with the male's love of beauty and need for sex, and it's close to impossible for him to detect the snare.

Big heaping hairy loads of brawny testosterone, and those particular masculine brain cells, which possess near countless numbers of testosterone

receptors, are fully capable of obscuring the male's ability to discern a woman's true motives. As unpopular as this may sound, I honestly, believe that your average female secretly assumes that such duplicity is righteous behavior. Likewise, most males, in the pursuance of sex, know they're being deceitful about love, but they don't understand how hurtful they can be. With Anna the prostitute, the beautiful brilliant Evangeline, Margo my wife, sexy Rosa, with a few casual brief sexual encounters thrown in, I was slowly learning the difference between acting, and what might pass for genuine love.

In a weird way, Anna, my first very childhood sexual experience, was the second most honest of the four, but then honesty is something of a variable entity. What's truth and honesty for one person aren't necessarily the same for another, owing to the hodgepodge of life's experiences, and the person's innate neurophysiology. The same applies for what people feel is justice. I've known good people, who knowingly and regularly broke the law. Furthermore, I've known police, who abided by the letter of the law, but were far from being good. Law and morality don't really go hand in glove. In addition, the number of people I've know, who profess to be

highly religious, often employ their religion like a threat or weapon, than as an instrument of love and caring. Oddly enough, almost all the atheists I've encountered were decent folks. The people I have known, who were the most dishonest in business, professed to be christians.

As a twelve year old, I'd told Anna that I loved her and wanted to marry her. I said that after I grew-up and became an adult, I would come back to Spain and marry her. She responded in a serious fashion, allowing me to maintain that allusion, but cautioned me.

“Let me give you a good piece of advice. Never marry a prostitute. Once a woman has been a prostitute, marriage is never a consideration for her. Prostitutes make bad wives, Joey. Besides, by the time you return, you'll have too many girlfriends, and I'll be old and my beauty will have faded. Furthermore, marriage is a bad idea, regardless of the circumstances. Marriage rarely works out, and even if it lasts, it's no fun... too much misery and too little happiness.”

About forty years later, I'd have a friend who'd also had once fallen in love with a beautiful Hong Kong prostitute. He claimed that she was the most

beautiful woman he'd even been with, and this guy was a discerning judge of beauty, and extremely popular with women. Like Anna, she too had told him that it was a bad idea to marry a prostitute. When my friend told me what the Hong Kong prostitute had said, I found the coincidence to be startling, as thunder on a clear afternoon. In that respect, perhaps prostitutes are more honest than are many more 'moral' women. Never did I tell my friend about the coincidence, since I feared he'd think the coincidence to be contrived; besides, I wasn't too proud of Anna being my first encounter. I suppose I've never been too perceptive when judging women. Appropriately, my daughter is continually lecturing me, about females... the pros and cons, as she perceives them to be, and she's rarely wrong. Mostly, she gives me the cons, since I'm still often blind to the negative attributes of women, and tend to sharply focus on their beauty, and whatever good deed they may commit, no matter how insignificant. Admittedly, my daughter has been an excellent teacher, and I've been far too slow a learner. She's likely saved me from tons to grief.

Had I married Rosa, I could have brought her back to America, as a citizen, at least in those days.

While she was certainly a beauty, I didn't want to make the mistake my maternal Grandpa had made marrying a beautiful bigot, and Rosa was certainly that. Besides, I'd just gotten-out of a relatively good, although stifling, marriage. Worse yet, I couldn't envision myself as Armando's son-in-law, and never could imagine my parents and my new step father meeting. To say the least, Rosa's dad was a dangerous unknown, a slightly unstable and lethal force to be reckoned with, and no doubt he'd have eventually wanted to follow his daughter to the United States. The only thing that could have improved Armando was a bullet. Moreover, I've seen what usually happens, when a relationship becomes a rescue operation. Besides, a year had passed and I felt the need for a change of venue.

In addition, I wanted to get further away from whatever it was that had happened that night, with the handy table leg in the rat-filled trash pile. Instead of taking the train and going back-up north, that morning, I boarded a huge time-worn bus, owned by the *Estrella de Plata* bus line, and traveled south, even further away from good ole Mobile, Alabama. Acapulco, on the western lower edge of Mexico, was to be my destination, based on information, I'd

received from a crazy little Italian hash customer. One evening, while I'd waited for Rosa to get off work, the customer and I had sat just inside the edge of the Chapultepec jungle, smoked some killer blond hash, and I'd listened to him rave on about Acapulco's moderate climate, lovely beaches, gorgeous women, and how he was crazy about the nightlife at the lavish *Prince Hotel*, with its underwater swimming pool bar. It's an understatement to say that many Italians have outgoing personalities, and are quick to share about their life's experiences. As it turned out, the Italian had given me an accurate endorsement of that beachfront paradise.

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The morning air was clear and fresh, and it seemed like a fine day to travel, and leave MC. Boarding the antique bus, I carried onboard my little blue cloth suitcase, with its' half pound of weed, carefully packaged, and tucked into the exterior pocket, and covered by my good luck yellow clothesline shirt. Underneath my loose clothes, I wore the bundles of cash, wrapped and taped in

brown paper, affixed around my waist and thighs with duct tape. Suffice it to say, that it was many times the amount of cash, that I'd left Mobile with.

Before entering Mexico, I had planned to remain in the country only a couple of weeks, until my currency had almost run dry, but I sincerely loved Mexico and its people, and unexpectedly had made so much money, there was no need to worry about leaving. Climbing aboard the well maintained and clean bus, I was feeling optimistic, yet in a couple of hours, I'd be facing one of the most terrifying threats of my foolish life... life in a miserable, mariachi-playing, over crowded Mexican prison, where the odds of an American surviving are close to zero.

Now days, the majority of Mexican prisons are no longer under government control! Violence in those prisons has shot through the roof, with 65 of the country's 101 biggest prisons, being under inmate control, as of 2012, according to the *National Human Rights Commission*! That fact is certainly something to be contemplated! Needless to say, I'm shocked and saddened that a country, which in my youth was filled with so many kind and gentle people has in my brief lifetime been completely overrun by gangs and corrupt government officials. It's now a country

largely ruled by criminals, and as stated, I fear the only way to rectify this is for the United States military to invade, and begin killing all the cartels and politicians.

Never would I have thought that such a grisly national change was possible, especially in gentle friendly Mexico. While some dangerous Mexicans have no doubt come into the United States, I feel confident that the vast majority of those, who have crossed our southern border are good folks, probably just trying to avoid the gangs and the oppressive economy. Nevertheless, they still need to complete the required steps toward citizenship, but just how many jobs can Americans afford to lose? If Hillary gets elected, she'll do all she can to open the borders, and thereby increase the democratic base... maybe. If Trump gets elected, he'll doubtlessly try to make it appear that all the Mexican immigrants are largely criminals, and he'll scream that we desperately need to build a wall. That's what America gets, two parties at complete opposite ends of the spectrum... reason be damned.

What is incongruent is that the republicans, who generally complain the loudest about the evil illegal Mexicans, benefit the most from their cheap

dependable labor, i.e., meat packing industries, road repair crews, corporately owned and private farms, labor for the construction industry, landscaping businesses, almost all types of manual factory work, etc. Immigrants work for less pay, and don't demand benefits. If Mexicans were so terribly dangerous, then considering the vast numbers, who have entered the United States, our country should have been destroyed, by now. Some criminal Mexicans have no doubt come across our southern border, but my gut feeling is that the Mexicans, who have been desperate to come to the United States, perpetrate far less crime, than does your average American citizen, and are far more willing to work and work hard.

Perhaps those LA latino gangs, which had formed long before the huge influx of Mexicans, might learn something from some of those honest hard working latino border crossers. The gang, MS-13, might just be being allowed to carryout certain violent crimes for the sole purpose of inspiring the American public against all Mexican immigrants. A fair percentage of that gang is under the age of seventeen! If a politician is looking for an effective piece of propaganda to turn the American people against Mexican immigrants, it's MS-13. Something tells me

that many, if not most of them, are illegal immigrants. If anyone plays that political card it will likely be a republican. The problem with that card is that only very few of the illegals become gang members. Of the millions which cross probably only a couple of thousand become criminal gang members of MS-13. You can bet, if Trump is elected, he'll play the MS-13 card to get his wall built.

Some of the new members are barely teens, just up from Mexico, and various Central American countries. Once they're in the United States, a certain number usually have no job, no friends, nor family, ergo they may turn to a Spanish speaking gang, and as one might expect, the gang takes them in and becomes their family. Our massive population growth has far out stripped the job market, so allowing more immigrants to cross is not economically wise.

Automation, robotics, and shipping jobs overseas, have destroyed most of the hope for fixing the unemployment problem. Of course, letting more illegals cross the border doesn't help. This better assures that more than ninety-nine percent of the wealth remains in the hands of far less than one percent of the people, and those homemade

cardboard signs will keep getting made. There are only about 600 billionaires in the US, that's about .000000000029 percent of the population, not even remotely close to one percent!

Some Americans avoid driving through certain intersections, just so they don't have to look at those cardboard signs and the poor homeless people, who hold them. This avoidance is not because they hate or dislike the homeless, whose signs are often impossible to read, but because they don't fit-in with some people's idea of what America is supposed to be. America's celebrated capitalism, when allowed to run to its monopolistic extreme, must give birth to crime and poverty. Once, there's too few businesses controlling the price of things such as: gasoline, diesel, drugs, dry goods, military weapons, construction materials, water, power, home loans, food, water, etc., they then control the prices, and as you might expect, the prices go up and up, as do the cardboard signs.

Ergo, its pretty simple... if the individual wants to survive, yet there's no decent place for them in polite society, they usually must turn to impolite society, and become a: mugger, beggar, drug dealer, thief, prostitute, con artist, etc. If you're a well-off,

you're probably certain that there's a way around this conclusion, but for far too many there just simply isn't a way, and remember, that half of America's population is on the left half of the bell curve, and so things are not so simple for them, especially if they're financially destitute.

They're often left with no choice, but to grab that black *Sharpie*, and scribble a semi-legible cardboard sign, something which they think sounds humble and pitiful, and frequently ends with the words, 'God Bless.' Besides the fact that their signs are often hard to read, they may not realize that those two words can be counter productive.

The more religious the motorist, the more the motorist is apt to be a republican, and as such, less likely to give the homeless money, but more apt to despise them. Democrats are usually not too religious. In Mobile, the homeless are everywhere. I've conducted my own independent poll, and it seems that 90 percent of the donations to the homeless are made by black people, and 3 percent by whites, and the remaining 7 percent by asians. Judging from the quality of the cars, in which the donors ride, it's pretty clear that the poorer the person, the more apt they are to give.

Routinely, the homeless try to find a clean spot on the sidewalk, or a few large piece of comfortable cardboard, or a nice patch of green grass, etc., on some busy street corner, with a long red light, to better garner their holy offerings. Hopefully said corner is close to a shelter or business, where they can go, if it rains, or gets too cold. Often there are territorial disputes over those corners. Many times, the homeless bring along their sympathy provoking dog, and it's usually not the motorists or the homeless, that have the best spirit.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/mexico-prison-inmate-control-2013-11>

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